

MACLEAN'S

MARTINIS AND MAUI

Gordon Campbell and the
B.C. premiers' curse

OUT OF THE RUNNING

Can Allan Rock survive to
campaign another day?

THE IMPROVISED CITY

Montreal is like a jazz medley,
writes Will Ferguson

THE NEW NEW WORLD ORDER

War with Iraq seems inevitable.
JONATHON GATEHOUSE
on what's at stake for the
White House—and Canada.



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'Avril Lavigne's accomplishments at such a young age are an amazing success story and a credit to her talent as a singer/songwriter.' —SHEILA HOBILLI-KATE, TORONTO

A matter of taste

Paul: who and who's not? As an Avril Lavigne fan, I have read article after article about her, only to see the same debate over whether she is "youthful" or not. It was overwhelming joy that yesterday when she not only let go of this discussion, but also committed new and interesting information ("Avril's Edge," Cover, Jan. 13). Some people out there may think that Avril is suddenly, unashamedly tomboy. I hope this article gives them some insight into what she's been going through. And thanks for featuring a picture of Claret Manor because they truly are an amazing band ("Abreave in Asia," Cover, Jan. 13).

Mary Gummer-Spong, Mississauga, Ont.

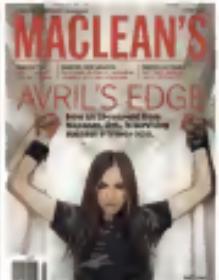
I fail to see the newsworthiness of eight pages devoted to the self-absorption of some allegedly musical teens ("Avril's edge," "Abreave in Asia," Cover, Jan. 13). The contrast with two pages devoted to social movements/legends' love/hate housing ("Modd housing," Homelessness) and three pages to the successes and trials of a person's progress of war ("A brutal search," Honey/we're heightened by the intensity of flavor. Oh dear, I'm getting old!

Murray M. WOOD, Toronto

I was extremely impressed with the "Avril in Asia" article. It was great to see Mathewholic's also deeper into the real music scene. More often in Canada have I recently heard had great local music stories flooded with pants-on-heads. Check out compilation CDs by small Canadian labels like Montreal Records (which features bands like Cuckoo's Nest) You'll see that Avril is by no means unique in an abundance of kids who want to "rock out."

Bob Houston, Toronto

Enjoyed the Avril Lavigne feature—she has big war hero in Britain, with a leg of faties cut in her music. Talent must run in the family as Avril's father, John, plays bass guitar on some of the tracks on the two early CDs, *My War* to *No! No! No!*



Sure, she did it with Neoprene, One...er, musicians Stephen Macht as the songwriter Paul Allaire, therapist friend

Unbiased approach

I am writing to express my frustration with EnCana Corp. CEO Gwen Morgan. "The holier oil burns" (Bennett, Jan. 13) Your article says that Morgan is an "advocate of

WHILE AVRI LAVIGNE'S FANS SHOWED THEIR APPRECIATION OF OUR JAN. 13 COVER STORY, other readers expressed alarm that we devoted such space to what one A. H. Shaver of Victoria called "keepalive oilmen, feel-masculinized, fat-wearing brutes whose primary instinct appears to be anger and who can barely string together a grammatically correct sentence." Scott Morrison of Whitecourt, Alta., wrote that, although he enjoys Lavigne's music, "I hope that the first time you write a cover on this guy unless he comes up with a solution to global warming or something." Rita House of St. Catharines, Ont., justified not only of Lavigne's foul language but also her poor command of grammar: "Ms. and him used as the subject of a sentence," she wrote, "is painful to my ear."

holistic medicine." But Morgan's life choices do not reflect a truly holistic approach. That would require changing the way people live, what and how much we eat, the work we do and, very importantly, how much we drive. North America is "built for drivers," ingrained in a way that promotes a sedentary, conventional lifestyle.cessive driving is also a major contributor to air pollution, which causes and aggravates respiratory diseases. Morgan fails to recognize that, through his work as an oil executive, he is a driving force in a large corporation that runs counter to a holistic approach to health.

Martha Farquhar McDonald, Toronto

Gwen Morgan stated that EnCana aims to "move the corporation in Ecuador in better shape than [the company] found it." With the porous Ecuadorian pipeline spilling regularly, that's certainly possible. However, while tourism is another viable industry in this beautifully diverse country, EnCana and its partners have relied upon breaking the pipeline through the town of Mindo, one of the best bridge-to-sea routes in South America. While it is projected to decline in the next 20 years, Ecuadorians all over will be feeling the effects long after EnCana has pulled out and moved on to its next country. Morgan's holistic oil look makes more than he knows.

Vetting for honesty

Audrey Wilson Stroob ("This is not the vote," The Editor's Letter, Jan. 13) and Peter MacLennan ("Winnipeg new leaders," Mainbridge on the Mend, Jan. 13) argue the anti-Liberal vote not suggest that the lack of dynamic political leaders is a major reason for fewer Canadians voting. Actually, extensive polling and anecdotal evidence suggest that Canadian apathy and under-informed political opinion is a main reason. "They're all the same," help themselves and their friends," a comment about politicians heard across the country. In 1993, the federal Liberals promised that all politicians regarding them to sit honestly and ethically, and in 1997 as an independent ethics watchdog (in all provinces have had fair years). The Prime Minister has finally introduced these measures in Parliament. He also wants big wealthy corporations and interest groups from dawdling so politi-

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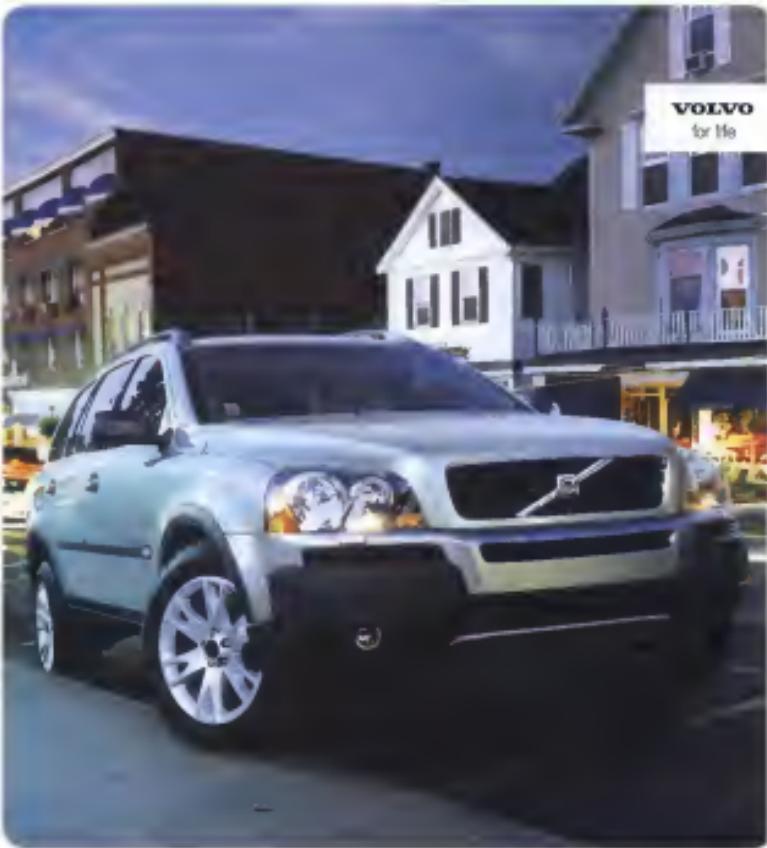
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THE MAIL

men, and surely limit individual donations [as Quebec and Manitoba have done]. Hopefully, Chretien is serious about making his main legacy such a long-overdue cleanup of the federal government.

BILL CHAMBER, Coordinator of Democracy Watch, Christopher of the Government Ethics Coalition, Ottawa

Unrepentant, unrehabilitated

Jonathan Gashouse writes that, "Every one should know their attitudes, verbal or otherwise, are either an ethnic or religious comment or isn't. We should, no matter who delivers them, no matter what their cause" ("No small issue," *Rainbow*, Dec. 30). Not so. Before he died, reverend and essayist Meister Eckhart was awarded the Order of Canisius and was able, metaphorically speaking, to stand beside David Albrecht, recently converted for his research about Jesus. In an article published in the Milwaukee Journal in 1966, titled "Lest we forget ... I hate the Germans," Eckhart begins his rant by declaiming that "Germans are in abomination to me ... I'm glad Dresden was bombed for no useful military purpose." Dresden, of course, was where tens of thousands of German civilians were killed over a 16-hour period on Feb. 13 and 14, 1945, by an Anglo-American force using incendiaries. Eckhart was not only not censured, but he went on to be celebrated.

From Steptoe, Stevens County, Wash.

The family we choose

When a self-reflection on our society ("Raped open instead of her," *Cafe*, Jan. 13), instead of choosing to do what I believe to be the right thing and spending time with family, people escaping our abusive lives and, as a result, sound more like a little self-righteous. Unfortunately, the report seems to me another example of a generally recognized right to take the easy road. If it becomes difficult, social it. Everything worthwhile takes some work, and families are no exception.

Makita Sone, Novato, Calif.



By June 21st, the Florida law will call my sisters, and the young adults who have been considered second daughters to me as they start to build their own families outside of home and relatives.

BETH HORNER, Aransas Park, Texas

The idea presented in "Kosher" (points instead of "no") have been endorsed by the gay community for decades. The term "gay family" has long been a part of our vocabulary, uniting people who have become a family because of a unique bond.

G. L. BASS, Derby

Marching as we war

Your article "A brutal march" (*Hysteria*, Jan. 13) brought back unhappy memories. During the last months of the war, not only was the Nazi-regged column of 150,000 POWs marched through a German winter and spring. A hundred thousand German refugees struggled westward, suffering severe hardship, many dying in the depths. However—as a 19-year-old boy I was among them, I was lucky. I survived. Between 1944 and 1948, 15 million German-speaking persons were expelled from their ancestral homes. Two million died.

Klaus D. Schmid, Vienna, Austria

Starling to freedom

I enjoyed Will Ferguson's story about Tom Sizemore, who built a ship in the middle of Siberia (*Crime of empire*, "Will Ferguson's Canada," Jan. 13). That the name of the ship, *Sizemore* (long-beard) was misspelled when it was rebuilt makes me wonder whether Will and the good people of Moose Jaw missed the final irony of the

title. There is a common saying in north-eastern Europe, used to express frustration with one's lot in life. It goes something like: "I am like a dung beetle, pushing a piece of dung uphill, only to have it roll on up of me." *La Tora* (Siberian) truly enjoy, or nearly perpetuating an elaborate hoax on his neighbors, a commentary on the emptiness of promises of reform in the New World?

MARY-LOU BENTON, Roseville, Minnesota

Privatization at the gates

This clarifying how consistently impious our governments are in the matter of health care. Our Prime Minister states in his interview with Maclean's that he is comfortable with private, for-profit companies alongside they run private services and more "managed free conditions of medicare." "I made a difference," *Q&A*, Dec. 30. An important problem would occur. Privatization would give American and European corporations the chance to pocket our own dollars. We would never see that money in Canada again. If private corporations can make it work, we can the contractor, justify and approve the right-to-rents, and give them some clout to get the job done.

ANDREW LEUNG, Vancouver, B.C.

By "What's in a word?" (Columns, Jan. 13), Mary Jacigan is asking directly into one of the major problems of our time: to all credit spaces. Writing comes first, without question, are closely related to the availability of privately paid service. Whether it's a medical abortion in a CAT scan or a simple bypass, the marketplace always has and will continue to supply prompt service in those in need. The politicians who care about not winning a two-to-one credit spaces have their hands in the sand. We already have one and because it provides a needed service, it will continue to exist.

G. L. COKER, Winona

Judgment on pot

The real story in the Ringette, Ont., case ("Where there's smoke," *The Week*, Jan. 13) was the judge's decision to set aside Marquette Medical Assess'upulation because they had been issued without due notice in *Parfumex*. As least Justice and judge in Canada who understand that Parliament—not rather than a minister's office or the Supreme Court—should be reading laws.

PETER NELSON, North Vancouver



What should we do when our neighbour goes to war?

- Offer our best soldiers
- Stand firmly by UN resolutions
- Send out an army of diplomats
- Sit on the fence

Watch. Then decide.

MACLEAN'S BEHINDTHESCENES



A PASSION FOR SPORTS

We Canadians love our sports. Not just hockey, either. Whether as players or spectators, millions of us across the country have embraced baseball, soccer, basketball, football, golf, tennis and many other sports with a true passion.

With that in mind, Maclean's is proud to include the premiere edition of Sportnet Magazine in its Feb. 3 issue (on newsstands the week of Jan. 27). Sportnet Magazine is brought to you by Rogers Sportnet, Canada's only regional specialty channel and the country's fastest-growing sports network. Sportnet's managing editor of hockey and well-known sports journalist Scott Morrison (above) oversees the project.

This first issue will take a critical look at the state of Canada's NHL teams, it will also profile Toronto Blue Jays third baseman and 2002 American League Rookie of the Year Eric Hinske, and it will take a crack at assembling the perfect NHL goalie (here's a hint—he has Patrick Roy's head and José Théodore's catching hand).

Three future editions of Sportnet Magazine will follow throughout 2003, bringing you the scoop on events that are impacting the world of professional sports, the teams and the athletes. They'll follow the playoffs, profile the players and deliver all the sports related stories that matter to you. Some of the magazine content will even come to life on a Rogers Sportnet Hockeycentral special — Canadian Hockey On Thin Ice, tune in Jan. 27 at 7 p.m. (Sportnet Ontario and Sportnet Pacific) and Jan. 30 at 7 p.m. (Sportnet West and Sportnet East).

Sportnet Magazine. Don't miss it.

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MILITARY | Some unfriendly testimony for the friendly fire pilots

In a day Louisianans, hearing racers, Canadians relieved that only eight lost April when a 227-kilogram bomb dropped from the skies over Afghanistan and killed four of their comrades. It was Canada's most celebrated case of death by friendly fire, and revisiting the event has brought out the communication gaps that plague all discussions at war. Canadian Capt. Joseph Jasper told the inquiry that his colleagues had been having difficulty communicating with their American counterparts at times, and that he personally was unaware of a US regulation that requires allied troops to use blinking lights when they take off at night.

But in the hearing to determine whether the two US pilots who dropped the bombs should face a court martial and less serious charges, it was senior American officers who allowed the issue during testimony

U.S. Col. Lawrence Schmid, a senior overseer of the air war, said Maj. Harry Schmidt and Maj. William Urbach "should have known" they were flying over an active aerial U.S. assault—it was an unadvised training ground, he said—and should have held fire. Members of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry were carrying out a live ammunition drill at Tarnak Farms—an abandoned terrorist compound—when the bomb struck.

Courtroom tapes show that just seconds after Schmidt dropped the bomb, he received a radio transmission confirming the troops were "friendly." But his lawyers argued that almost three minutes passed between the time Schmidt first reported his intention to bomb and the actual incineration. What happened during that final three minutes is still being probed in detail.

Quote of the week | 'Collective bluffing cannot bring about collective security.'

U.S. Defense Secretary DONALD RUMSFELD quoting MacKenzie King, who also said, 'Conservatism is necessary, but not necessarily cooperation'

ScoreCard

*** Dovish Canfield:** Of course U.S. politics is about at tony speed. Paul paid to science study that says a few darts are good for a voter's health.

*** PIG: Brasfield:** Henry Paul's cracker-worms writers' block and pays a 76-page installment to be released in June. Ought to keep the meat free of ribs for months.

*** Bertiehawkins:** Service has come of my respected major Mt. Laurier, who shuns bands with hell's angels, issued about being taken by a terrorist group recently via the city like a Mary-Brother movie. Most men avoid the renamed Banditron and a nation's sense.

*** Jetset Habsburg:** Return of Prince Charles to his family country despite his philandering shoddy behavior. Charles will go to war in Iraq without a backlog days; it's all part of his on-the-job training. Aye, we're ready to fight.

*** Avery Gardner:** Canadian catcher extraordinaire held hell of time as a Montreal Expos cheering the Jays Ruth integers, rather than as a new Ruth West, the team he belongs to. And if it's not Kevin, there's still another extra-reserve game.



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THE WEEK

WORLD

GHANA Twin 17-month-old girls, who were joined at the back until a rare and life-saving operation at the UCLA Medical Centre in August, returned home, their heads wrapped in bandages and crowned with daisies. The "two-back Miracles," Maria de Jesus and Maria Teresa Quay Alvarez, are not yet crawling and will still need substantial medical care. They will be living with their parents in a new donated home in Guatemala City, far from the little village they were born in.

AFGHANISTAN Followers of the ousted Taliban regime have regrouped near the south east border with Pakistan, Afghan officials said. Powers have been put up in Kandahar, a former stronghold of the radical regime, calling for a holy war against foreigners and the US-backed government of Hamid Karzai.

AMERICAN JUSTICE It was a somber occasion Monday when Governor George Ryan, a 66-year-old Republican, commuted the death sentence of the death penalty and left performing four on death row and commuting the sentences of 167 other life-in-prison. Ryan called the system moribund and deeply flawed, even as it showed no signs of ending the capital punishment debate. Illinois' prosecution, meanwhile, said they would continue to seek the death penalty for serious crimes.

A Virginia judge agreed to give 17-year-old John Lee Malvo an adult, subject to execution if found guilty in the Washington sniper slayings. Prosecutors said his prints link him to at least three fatal attacks and that it was worth the phone to pursue demanding a US\$10-million ransom and the killing spree.

INDIA The convergence drama revisited. Internet visionary Steve Case, 46, "reluctantly" stepped down as chairman of AOL Time Warner Inc., the media giant whose crest 2½ years ago presided over an international breakup of business empires. The entertainment conglomerate wrote off US\$14 billion last year. It has now refuted its executive deck to play down its Internet business and concentrate on its AOL media collection of movies and magazines that first made it rich.



ARMENIA High levels of arsenic, exceeding federal standards, have been found in the soil of at least 34 playgrounds in seven large Canadian cities, according to a proposed Environmental Defense Canada. One Toronto park has exhibited levels 12 times above the allowable, believed to be from equipment made with pressure-treated wood.

POLITICS Nova Scotia MP Peter MacKay and Calgary lawyer Jane Pirie are the first candidates to announce for the slow-to-start federal Conservative leadership race, to be decided June 1. Saskatchewan free-trade opponent David Orchard, Nova Scotia MP Scott Brison and long-time backroomer Hugh Segal, who worked for Brian Mulroney, are expected to join in.

HOCKEY The Buffalo Sabres became the second NHL team to file for bankruptcy protection, listing US\$180 million in outstanding debt, including \$442,159 to the Vancouver Canucks that the Sabres had not shown in legal documents. The Sabres have a new buyer in the wings. Their problems are reflected in the bankruptcy of mid-sized oil-giant Marathon against former owners John Rigas and his sons, who are charged with filing false company Alphabus Communications out of US\$82.5 billion.

OTTAWA Senators owner Red Bradley and an unnamed private subscriber had a bid to purchase the federal capital's bankrupt club if the NHL rejects the offer, an option still on the table.

DIPLOMACY Canada will lead the US against a bloc of African nations to oppose the "appropriate" inclusion of Muammar Gaddafi's Libya in chair of the UN Human Rights Commission.

RELIGION Anglican Minister Bill Graham, also called Leichhardt's ambassador, Repressed himself on the carpet for suggesting that "Jews or Zionists" control Canada's media. Graham had also warned Canadian tourists not to wear clothing that alienated their neighbors in the Middle East.

KING CONS A bitter three-month fight for Fording Inc., the mining arm of the once mighty Canadian Pacific empire, ended in a \$1.2-billion compromise when rivals Beck Commerce Ltd. of Vancouver and Sherritt International Corp. of Toronto agreed to join forces with Fording and combine all their coal

PETER MCNAUL/SHUTTERSTOCK

CHUCK COOPER/SHUTTERSTOCK



PORNGRAPHY | "Who are you? Who, who, who, who?"

He's been a *minor* legend—not just for his bone-crushing riffs with the guitar but also for his counterculture at his nearly 40 years on the scene, the Who's Pete Townshend has been rock's case officer among and around one-offs more eccentric than boys, with no-mil. It seemed to come of his salvation. But *Laurelized*, a purveyor of proto-punk? Or is he merely a High-Fidelity target for overly zealous investigators zeroing in on hundreds of thousands of alleged kiddie-cam users worldwide?

As part of that effort, Canadian police forces have tracked, for 25 years, of more than 2,300 suspects who used credit cards to commit a particularly nasty one-on-one *felony*, what down in

Townshend, a penance of kiddie poem? Or
ought we wish her much troubled childhood?"

But fewer than 120 have been arrested because the 12-year-old law lacks detailed regulations and a high profile, Yonkers police and the Grillo's attorney here said at a press conference. But the profile was given a decided boost when Seoane's King carried off Yonkers' computer and arrested—but didn't charge—him. "For having a child pornographic Web site, I was outraged," he said. "I was outraged, but [Seoane] himself was more zealous. He had stumbled on these sites for research he was doing into his own treated chestnut, he told reporters. A year ago he even posted an essay on his Web site describing the ease with which pedophilic images on the Internet can be "taken like a fine line of cocaine at a dissolved cocktail party; only the strong-willed or less easily ensnared can resist."

partly developed in Canada. U.S. authorities immediately halted 27 similar gene-therapy trials [Canada's efforts never got to the stage of using re-engineered genes to treat genetic disorders]. The two French boys began from a group of 11 who all appeared to be overcoming the rare condition called "bubble boy disease," where they were born without a working immune system.

After 15 years, researchers have identified a gene that causes deadly brain lesions among a small group of people—descendants of the few families who settled Quebec's Saguenay region in the mid-1800s. No cure has been found but identification allows a mother the option of terminating a pregnancy.

HEALTH German regulators are warning pregnant women and nursing mothers to stop, or sharply curtail, eating french fries or potato chips because most contain the chemical acrylamide. First identified April 1 as a potential cancer-causing ingredient in fried and baked foods, acrylamide is highly water soluble and therefore passes easily to fetuses and breastfed newborns.

Breaking can kill but nicotine patches are helping some Alzheimer's patients avoid fraying memories, according to scientists at Duke University Medical Center.

GLOBAL WARMING A new book by astrophysicist Donald Brownlee and paleontologist Peter Ward says the Earth has at least 2 billion years, give or take.



Mansbridge on the Record



OUR UNKNOWN HEROES

Canada's military men and women do brave things—that we can't talk about

IN THE PASSAGE last week, Maclean's mourned the death, at age 106, of Harry Burrell. Retelling about his life got me thinking. Burrell served that country as a pilot in the First World War, and he was the last of the brave young men who flew the world's first fighter aircraft. They're gone now, but their names and stories remain. Knowing what they did has made generations of Canadians proud.

But what about the stories and stories of Canadian fighters in the war of our times—the one against al-Qaeda? We don't—and may never—know them. Is that the way it should be?

On the morning of Aug. 30, 2001, I was seated in a boardroom in National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa. Across the table, the country's most senior officers were listening to the case for closing the security surrounding some of their operations.

The idea was to get cameras through the wall that prevents Canadians from seeing their armed forces come home. For the most part, we got what we hoped for, but it was hard work. Especially when it came to then-Turk Force 1—the chopper special operations force that in the summer of 2001 was unloved by most Canadians. We would need to talk to its members and put them on camera. The generals were absolutely opposed: this was a secret group, and it had to be protected. Then like in any kind of operation, national security issues, and even members of Parliament didn't know much about TUF 2. Weeks of discussion had brought us to that moment where we finally reached compromise—we would get live video, the first media group to do so.

That arrangement held until 12 days later, as its members descended into the night that the special operations world of course-missionaries in Afghanistan. These are Canada's military heroes of the war against al-Qaeda: the secret troops who engaged the

enemy on the ground—but we may never know who they were, what they did, or how they did it.

The military arguments are simple, and fast rising: showing or telling anything would mean TUF 2's anonymity would be over. Individual identities would be revealed, their operations put under scrutiny. That's whenever I raise TUF 2 at some of the

most senior levels of power it gets a wince. "If only you knew what they have there!" or "We're being told Canadian commanders are the best in the world," just what you want to tell a journalist who wants to do the story, but can't. It's not the same elsewhere. British documentary makers have just shown incredible footage of their ops and ops done in Afghanistan, and American writers have written remarkable stories about commandos who do as they're told in the enemy mountains near Tora Bora.

There was a time when Canada couldn't say enough about its military heroes, such as "heroic" Burrell and his, aforementioned, fought a seemingly never-ending stream of Nazis attacking Canadian positions in Italy during the Second World War, or Andrew McIvor and those he gave his life trying to save his gallant crew as their burning Lancaster spiraled toward the ground. Or navy pilot Robert Gray, and he died, during the very last days of the war, on a bombing run against a Japanese ship. Those stories didn't just pass mortal into a country that was worried—they also told about the heroism, beauty and honor that war.

But those days are long: the country who is military men and women to risk their lives for little pay and few benefits, when using who comes call out of date equipment. And then, when they actually face serious, their stories can't be told. Doesn't seem right.

PETER MANSBRIDGE is chief correspondent of CBC Television News and Anchor of *The National*. To comment: toronto.macleans.ca

Passages

AWARDED Michael Carson Edkar, Siray Mother, better known as Adele, is one of 180 new appointments to the Order of Canada. Gov. Gen. Adrienne Clarkson also named former politicians and humanitarians Stephen Lewis, director David Cronenberg, best novelist Arthur Leving, poet George Bowering and former Bank of Canada governor Gordon Thompson to the Order. The sword-wielding Mother (60), is the editorial page cartoonist for the Montreal Gazette and is syndicated around the world.

AWARDED Nils Verdian, the writer of *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, and producer Rita Wilson and Sam Fadiel, accepted best comedy film prize at the Jan. 13 People's Choice Awards in Los Angeles. The next day, Verdian announced that she and most of the original *Greek Wedding* cast TV spin-off of *Wedding*, the fifth highest grossing movie last year. Meanwhile, Verdian, 40, has a lawsuit filed by her former manager, Rick Segal, who claims that the Winnipeg born actress owes him 15 per cent of her compensation from the film.

DEPARTED An autopsy has revealed that Maurice Gibb of the Bee-Gees died of sudden cardiac arrhythmia, which caused intense nocturnal blood flow. Gibb, 53, underwent emergency surgery at Miami Beach, Fla., after suffering cardiac arrest on Jan. 9. He died three days later. His bandmates, brothers Andy and Barry questioned whether the hospital operated too quickly.

AWARDED Toronto's first-budget mayor, Mel Lastman, 69, will not seek re-election. After nine appliance salesmen, Lastman spent several years as mayor of North York before that city disappeared in the amalgamation of a greater Toronto. In 1997, Lastman became the first mayor of the new mega-city. He is known for his administration as well as his embarrassing public gaffes.

RETIRED Sébastien Lacroix, 26, has left the provincial minister of Montreal Lacombe. won a gold medal at the 2000 Sydney Olympics—without his partner David Ménor of Toronto.



BUSINESS | Manulife's D'Alessandro stands out in a crowd

It's been an open secret, ever since Dominic D'Alessandro became chief executive of Manulife Financial Corp. in 1994, that his real goal was to transform the insurance company into one of the country's largest banks. Now, it appears a daring attempt to make good on that dream was used last fall by Finance Minister John Manley, legal assistant to the state adviser, Pierre Marois and a probable contender himself for the top job.

Over a period of a few months, D'Alessandro and John Huskin, CEO of the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, met to discuss combining their two operations and creating an insurance/bank. The meeting, for D'Alessandro at least, was perfect: following a failed foray into electronic banking in the U.S., CIBC's share price was the dregs, making the marriage more attractive than ever.

But the plan was also, well, pretty good. Its bank was desperately lacking direction, and the deal would have put it on a clear path with a well-enumerated Ottawa player—D'Alessandro—at the helm.

But for Manley, alas, the timing couldn't have been worse. Not only did he have to bid off (or now know) another, different merger file—planned union of the Bank of Nova Scotia and Bank of Montreal, but he was thinking about taking on the patient battle of his career, against former finance minister Paul Martin, for the Liberal party leadership. It's hard to run for the hearts and minds of Main Street Canada once you've become seen as the champion of Ray Somer.

Insurance loss is determined to change the financial landscape with or without D'Alessandro.

While financial services have undergone massive consolidation around the world, in Canada there has been a curious imposed moratorium on big bank mergers. As a result, Canadian finance has slipped in size relative to other international peers. To bulk up, D'Alessandro, rebounding from CIBC, has taken a run at Canada Life Financial Corp. Even though its board has rejected Manulife's opening offer, D'Alessandro is expected to win the day and create an insurance company—the country's largest—big enough for his ambition. But the pace, and cost, of course, has a lot to do with it. He ran Montreal-based Laurentian Bank, and before that was the youngest-ever senior executive at the Royal Bank of Canada. Chances are, once the political dust clears, he'll take another crucial consolidation, from an even stronger base. And he is the guy to remember who his friends are.

KATHERINE MADOLE



THE NEW NEW WORLD ORDER

With a second Gulf war looming, JONATHON GATEHOUSE reports on what's really at stake

THE MACHINERY OF WAR is lurching into gear. Increasing the pressure by increments, the United States is mobilizing its ships, soldiers, tanks and planes for an attack on Iraq—last week ordering 62,000 more troops to get ready for service in the Persian Gulf and join the 75,000 already in place or en route. United Nations inspectors in Baghdad have stepped up their search for a “smoking gun” to prove once and for all that Saddam Hussein has continued his drive to arms an arsenal of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons, turning up no trace of every artillery shell that once held poison gas. And although the timetable seems to change by the hour, war within weeks or at least as next fall—that is a growing concern that a confrontation is now inevitable. “Time is running out,” George W. Bush warned in a recent speech. “Our will and need of games and deception.”

Bush has warned that “Time is running out—I am sick and tired of games and deception.”

flood of Iraqi refugees. Israel, a target of lead strikes in 1991, has again received Patriot anti-missile systems from America to protect its cities.

House-like, she chided UN inspectors, inched toward his next briefing to the Security Council on Jan. 22, although he and others here already said there were many unanswered questions arising from Iraq’s 12,000-page declaration of its arms stockpiles and weapons program. Bush is scheduled to give his State of the Union address the next night and will meet with Britain’s Tony Blair—who has dispensed a novel task force to the Gulf—at Camp David on Jan. 31. Pentagon planners say they will have 150,000 troops, the minimum number observers believe are needed to launch a full-scale invasion, in place by mid-February.

Overseas, the wary U.S. allies, seem tent on the issue. Last week, Jean Chirac played down suggestions by his defense and foreign affairs ministers that France will join in an attack even if the UN fails to deliver a majority of approvals—though he pointedly refused to shut the door on such participation. Senator



Heartfelt goodbyes have become commonplace as troops leave the S.A.T.

ANOTHER FINE PETROLEUM BY-PRODUCT

"The problem with Iraq is not oil," assassination victim Donald Rumsfeld, the U.S. secretary of defense, told reporters for the first time under that moniker. "The problem with Iraq is chemical and biological weapons today and nuclear weapons tomorrow." The problem for Donald Rumsfeld is that hardly anyone believes he's telling the whole truth.

If you're looking for the crucial difference between North Korea and Saddam Hussein's horde, the answer is \$12 billion in Iraq, which the world's second largest proven oil reserve behind neighbouring Saudi Arabia, and experts believe hundreds of billions more barrel remain to be discovered. Although the United States has tried to reduce its dependence on Middle East oil since the energy crisis of the 1970s (imports from the region now account for some 23 per cent of American consumption),

Japan, Europe, and many other parts of the world will rely heavily on Gulf crude. "It's a security-of-supply issue," says Werner Lauerman, a global-energy analyst with the Canadian Energy Research Institute in Calgary. "The Bush administration believes the long-term stability of Saudi Arabia is in question and it needs an alternative." Although Iraq's oil infrastructure is outdated and in poor repair, the country still manages to produce up to 2.5 million barrels a day, with the potential for much more.

There's money. Some White House planners are even seriously floated the idea of using Iraq in oil-help the war's \$50- to \$60-billion estimated cost. And a new Western-friendly regime in Baghdad could mean billions in windfalls for petrochemical companies—energy those who explore and drill, but also those who supply and manufacture equipment. Cheap gas for consumers, however, is probably not part of the Bush doctrine. "Iraq has the production capacity to break the back of OPEC, but I don't think that's what the American want," says Lauerman. "If prices get too low, high-cost



oil fields like those in Canada, the U.S. and Europe are no longer profitable, producers' assemblies and the world becomes more, not less, dependent on Middle East crude.

On the other hand, a drawn-out conflict in Iraq or a war that stretches throughout the region could cause shortages and a surge in prices, potentially crippling the world economy. The U.S. has 192 surface-based brigades in Iraq, covering almost all of the Gulf Coast, far more contingencies, but that won't last long in inventory within 19-6 million barrels a day total. In the dangerous game of war in the Middle East, oil is off the wild card.

BUT WHAT HAVE YOU DONE FOR ME LATELY?

The forces are steadily free. The Abrams tanks on their way. We're still officially undecided, but the federal government is finding that split fence is to be an increasingly untenable voting place.

To be frank, Canadian overextended and ill-equipped military doesn't have much to offer as any incursion and campaign against Iraq—our CF-18 fighter jets need a con-

tinued series played a part in Afghanistan, but what will a new war bring?

communications and weapons upgrade, combat transport aircraft, Foreign missions, and we don't have the capacity in our air ranks and armoured vehicles to do the region, but as in many things in life, it's the thought that counts. "The Americans want flags. They want coalition partners," says Marion Shafack, a defence analyst with York University.

In November, the United States sent a message with its to Ottawa, asking for navy frigates, Aeronaut patrol aircraft, Coyote reconnaissance vehicles, and commandos from Joint Task Force 2 in the event of another Gulf war. The Chrétien government has dragged its feet responding, saying a wants U.S./NATO approval for an attack against Saddam before making a decision that a show of displeasure from Washington may impinge more heavily against the U.S.-air force pilots who dropped the bombs on us down, though believe both Washington and Ottawa seemed only when it comes to any place except more soldiers in harsh way

policy debates continue to make headlines in France, Germany and Australia, and even Blair, America's longest booster in the run-up to war, has taken a sharp downturn from his patient and measured

speeches, however, seen as being little effect on America's determination to topple a regime that it perceives as a threat to regional stability and global security. The White House last week laid the groundwork for an alternative to a UN-led resolution, formally asking its NATO partners for military assistance, as it did for its unresolvable in Kosovo in 1999. "Emergency senior administration officials" are frequently quoted as the U.S. media surging. Bush is ready to go at it, if necessary.

The harsh perception of war has dressed out the soft language of diplomacy. Blair's general press the case for conflict 24 hours a day on news channels. The rhetoric is flowing fast and furious out of Washington, Baghdad, and other world capitals. But when the shooting starts, what will really be at stake?



SEARCHING FOR A SMOKING GUN

It's hard to say when we reached a consensus that there is something inherently unsporting about certain categories of bombs, missiles and shells. After all, weapons of all types are designed to maim and kill, and governments and military expand billions every year trying to find more efficient means to that end. Nonetheless, the international community has decided to draw the line at letting just any device have its own modality of chemical, biological and nuclear devices.

What makes Saddam Hussein a pariah is not his pursuit of what the Bush administration likes to label "weapons of mass destruction" (Israel, India, Pakistan and others continue to pursue nuclear programs with few consequences), but his apparent willfulness to use them. In the 1990s, Iraq forces (often following battle planes drawn up by covert American advisers) used mustard, sulfur or nerve gas on at least 10 occasions, killing and injuring more than 20,000 Iraqis and Kurds. And their

leaders in the north of Iraq took up arms against Saddam's regime after the Gulf War.

are lingering suspicion that American troops made first Gulf War were also exposed to poison gas in the field.

In the years after that conflict, the United Nations conducted significant audits of biological and chemical weapons in Iraq and evaded no sophisticated and far-reaching efforts to buffoonize such devices and accuse nuclear capability. Saddam Hussein's regime actively resisted international scrutiny, the trembling, delaying and ultimately expelling the inspectors. The question today is what has Iraq been up to since it wagged every parading stick to co-exist in 1990?

Terry Taylor, a former UN chief weapons

inspector in Iraq and now head of the U.S. office of the London-based International Institute of Strategic Studies, says he has no doubt that Saddam has entangled his son in the same kind of lies he told himself. "Even our most intrusive we never cracked him," Taylor said. "People should not underestimate Saddam Hussein." Taylor agrees with other

military experts that the Iraqis are only short-term, if not imminent, away from having the bomb. "Nuclear weapons are what really worry me," he says. "Saddam's spent 25 years working on this program and spent more than \$13 billion and has very capable people."

In the end, such fears and suspicions may be all the proof the Bush administration needs to launch a war. At Hans Blix and his inspection team in Iraq fail to find "smoking gun," the White House masters has become "the absence of evidence is not the absence of absence." In a post-Sept. 11 world, the idea of a volatile dictator armed with the deadliest types of weapons, sitting atop a significant portion of the world oil supply is something America feels it can't tolerate.

OSAMA BIN HUSSEIN?

Saddam Hussein's whereabouts have been sealed off since Sept. 13, 2001. According to the Washington Post, that's the day George W. Bush instructed officials at the self-smoldering Pentagon to begin planning for a war in Afghanistan and, almost in passing, to lay



out military options for conflict with Iraq.

So even now, despite the best of efforts of the CIA and other intelligence services, there is still no compelling connection, direct or otherwise, between the Iraqi chemists and the attacks on New York and Washington, or terrorism at large. "There is no evidence that would justify military action," says Mugnai-Gagnon, deputy director of the Centre for the Study of Terror and Political Violence at St. Andrews University in Scotland. Above individual terrorism like the infamous Abu Nidal, however, found shelter and succor in Baghdad, because Hussein isn't pulling the strings of radical Islamists, as some of us thought. "With U.S. forces to go in with Iraq's it's not about Baghdad's links to al-Qaeda," Ramsey says.

Rather, the White House is seemingly unshakable in its resolve to remove a long-time thorn in the American side, is based, in part at least, on the assumption that Saddam has been a belligerent in the past and will inevitably prove to be one again in the future. It's a strategy of "preventative war"—shifty new dictum for American foreign policy—that

United Nations inspectors continue to search for evidence of disarmament weapons.

It's publication like Vice-President Dick Cheney have been calling for since long before Sept. 11.

As in 1991, some pundits and intelligence analysts are warning the species that command Saddam Hussein will never back, dispatching teams of terrorists, perhaps armed with chemical or biological weapons, to bring the war home to the West. It's a possibility, but one's reasoning, according to Ramsey. "If the mother was with Iraq, I would be having some de-plexion," he says. Iraq is more likely to use a diabolical counter-punch against U.S. troops in Iraq, in hopes of muddying the conflict. Cold comfort for the rest of the world.

BAKHDAH, U.S.A.

Reporters of the partition over Saddam Hussein's real or imagined arsenal of mass destruction, Americans phantoms have to be feeling pretty confident about their chances in Gulf War—The Sequel. In 1991, the ground

campaign to liberate Kuwait lasted just 100 hours, following 30 days of round-the-clock bombing. Coalition forces claimed to have destroyed 95 percent of Iraq's tactic, 35 percent of its armored vehicles and artillery, sank 35 ships, and forced what remained of an air force to take shelter in Iran. The best estimates put Iraqi combat and civilian deaths in the tens of thousands versus just 220 coalition troops, 44 of whom had suffered injuries.

In short, it wasn't the fight they had, and the evidence suggests 12 years of inaction and no-fly zones have made the balance of power even more lopsided.

In many ways, the conventional military threat posed by Iraq to the rest of the White House's war on Iraq and its allies are already fading ahead of a post-Saddam world and the potential fallout. Their most recent scenario, the so-called "soft case" for war, holds that a democratic, secular, Western-friendly government in Iraq could be the domino that starts the transformation of the entire region.

Ronald Aspin, director of Middle East and South Asian Hopkins University, argues that

changing the regime in Baghdad is the first step to "sucking the oxygen" out of Islam, he believes. "Arabs no longer believe that justice can be obtained in one's land from one's own rulers," he says. "Politically, economically, culturally, these are wretched nations." A "deterred" Iraq would stand as an example of America's good intentions and an assurance for reformers, says Asara.

There would also be benefits for U.S. foreign policy. Iran, part of Bush's "axis of evil," would be bracketed by more progressive governments in Afghanistan and Iraq, putting added pressure on a regime that many see facing another revolution. Iraq would assume the role of America's new best friend in the Middle East, reducing its dependence on Egypt and Saudi Arabia, two hotbeds of anti-Americanism.

"We have a dominant imperial position in the world and the region, and we are there to stay," says Asara. "Iraq is not a bad place to show that the American empire is not just about military budgets and蟲ent bombing but also reform and a commitment to secular, democratic government." It's a vision shared by many high-ranking Republicans. "The road to Baghdad looks like the beginning of a much longer highway."

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO WASHINGTON

Of course, there is another, and far less charitable assessment of what America hopes and needs to accomplish by going to war with Iraq. Not least because the globe's large economic power through economic alliance freed from Cold War worries that has spent might merely into world wars, and faced with a new era of terrorism, the United States is serving notice—first in Afghanistan, now in Baghdad—that its interests will be firmly held past fire.

"The history of American foreign policy has been a history of continual expansion from the end of the Revolutionary War to the present," says Howard Zinn, author of the acclaimed *A People's History of the United States*. "It's an ongoing extension of American military, economic and political power." The talk of establishing democracy, promoting freedom and liberating oppressed peoples is just that. Zinn points to the long and depressing list of authoritarian governments uninvited or supported by the United States. "We're not interested in democratic reform," he says. "We've



Washington believes that toppling Saddam may spark change throughout the region

interested in regimes we can control."

Comedy the history of the entire Gulf conflict provides few reasons for optimism. In the months after the war, when Kurds in the north and Shiites in the south took up arms against the Iraq government, the United States still opted for Saddam's repressive status quo over the disorder of rebellion. Kuwait, liberated in the name of freedom, may be more open than some of its neighbors, like Saudi Arabia, but remains far from a democracy. And it is Iraqis who suffered the most in both the war—seas of blood and regional strikes turned out to be as bloody and brutal as any other military action—and the 13 years of sanctions that have followed.

Some critics have suggested that Bush is simply cleaning up the mess left behind by his daddy. And there is some personal bias

gag, as evidenced by his defiance during a speech last September to a purported 1993 plot by Saddam to assassinate Treasury Zarin in doubtful. Does Bush really think he's avenging his father? If so, that would be a patrician reason for sending a huge number of people into combat and bombing accuracy," he says. But there is a sense of history repeating itself. The cast of characters—Cheney, Rumsfeld, Powell, Saddam—is largely the same, and the rhetoric all too familiar.

The crucial difference this time may be the opinion polls. Despite months of silence following by Washington, many Americans remain unconvinced that the looming war will be just or noble. Skepticism, both at home and abroad, may not be enough to derail what now seems inevitable, but perhaps some lessons have been drawn from the past. A recognition, at least, that the new, new world order it has caused is very different from the old.



TRANSFORMED BY WAR

How the first Gulf conflict changed the United Arab Emirates

IN THE MID-1970S, my father arrived in the United Arab Emirates to start a new job, with wife and infant daughter. We租了一间 We flew into an airport that was built more than one or two runways and a small watchtower. Twenty-five years later, when we immigrated from the UAE to Canada, we flew out of an airport that looked like a futuristic Disneyland.

It's hardly the symbol of how this tiny oasis nation transformed itself from a Middle Eastern backwater into a small but important destination for international business people, tourists and diplomats. And the UAE has become the envy of its neighbors because it makes full advantage of the opportunity that a war in their backyard presented.

This conflict began on Jan. 17, 1991, with the Allied bombing campaign against Iraq. With Iraq's invasion of Kuwait the week prior, some had said that the UAE would be next. We were given warnings of a possible chemical attack directed at Saddam. But we were more preoccupied with the changes taking place right around us.

Until then, the UAE had been the small, neo-rich neighborhood of the big playground Persian Gulf—Saudi Arabia. But the country had found a war in its neighbors with West-era-style capitalism while maintaining a Muslim and Arab culture and identity, following the Saudi lead among geopolitical matters, but going its own way in attracting foreign investment and involvement in its economy. Dubai's rulers were carving out a niche by being what Saudi Arabia was once open to the West. It was a process that only accelerated with the war—and after the end of hostilities.

Although Allied bombers took off from Saudi bases, the UAE played a key role. The security compromise it entered went out of its way to make their country a resistance point for "Western allies." By the end of the war, the infrastructure in Dubai, the coun-

try's commercial capital, as well as office and residential space, had grown exponentially. Multinational companies like Marsden and FedEx set up shop, three flights crossed over to India, Pakistan and beyond. In 1985, the UAE had established its own airline, Emirates, by the mid-'90s it was being consistently voted among the best in the world—no mean feat.

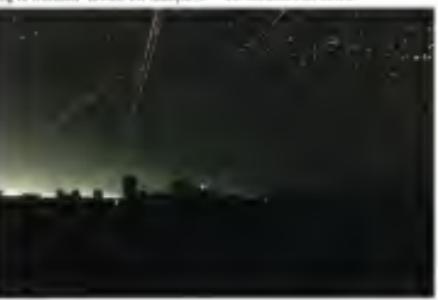
The UAE now features world-class hotels and resorting pristine beaches. Dubai has earned a reputation as a shopper's paradise; there's even an annual shopping festival held every winter season. The city has cultivated the image of a cosmopolitan haven, where people from all over the world work, spend money and have tons of fun. Of the country's 2.3 million people, more than 15 per cent are tourists, but they call our real the country through ownership laws that ensure that in most cases businesses have majority local partners.

All sounds too good to be true. The last 12 years of prosperity have thrown money and privilege at young literati. But it's been a struggle to keep young ones from drifting away from the past, the lack of it all and looking to tradition—toward the mosque. It

makes the world less confusing. As far as I'm concerned, the people who come after the war often lack the pioneering spirit that was born out of the older generation's one-country-one-client desire to create something more tangible than a fast, fat-free version. And an unwelcome consequence of opening up Dubai's doors to the world has sometimes been a lack of understanding among new citizens of local customs and values.

Now, there is another war, it may not be so easy for even the UAE's notable political minds to maintain a patriotic route that unites all in a single front. Awareness across this time out are seen in more preliminary and sister. Greater freedom of expression has brought sympathy for starving Iraqis, not support for an American war on terror. As the U.S. and Iraq do their high-salary dance, Dubai and the UAE will wonder if they alone—shop, smile, money and party—can still some one makes the next move. For me, Dubai has become a place I'd rather not recognize. But for all the uncertainties, it will survive—and that means stability, not of the kind that when it needs to.

TARIQAHM KAMALI IS AN ATTORNEY AND CO-FOUNDER OF THE LAW FIRM OF KAMALI & KAMALI.





IT'S ALWAYS SOMETHING

In B.C., the premier's job comes equipped with a built-in curse

MORNING, and I feel your bones growing to the premier. Certainly not in British Columbia, the baneful red belt of Canadian politics. Here—well, with the inevitability of gravity, of taxes, of winter rain—sagacious premiers are doomed to an ugly confrontation, usually in their own hand.

Covering B.C. politics and business, the reporters look so damned happy at their ownership—a smugness that is the root of all evil. They are the only ones in the room not to know they've won a starring role in an ongoing political tragedy. Invariably they pledge a newsroom of reporters, and invariably they deliver—finding sleep within themselves the unique recesses of their countenances.

I claim with some sorrow that—though I have agent nearly as much time watching the province's fallen governors in court as I have in the legislature. Bill Bennett, premier from 1975 to 1986, was the last to survive a full term in office. Even he, in retirement, needed a good defense lawyer.

Now comes Premier 03-02659, the slave-taker number. Most police give an over-refreshed Gordon Campbell after his failed dive with the department's Intoxycare 5000. This time it was the spectacular tragedy of drowning drunk after three months, character and conduct at the Hawaiian condo of Canadian friends. But, hey, it's always something.

The breath test, which Campbell finally released five days after news of his arrest broke in Canada, topped out at an impressive blood-alcohol reading of 0.169. That's almost twice the legal limit, in Hawaii and B.C., of 0.08, or 10 milligrams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood. Mothers Against Drunk Driving estimates that amount is equal to 14 standard drinks, which explains why Campbell was apparently oblivious to his erratic driving. A Vancouver TV station dispatched a reporter to a local bar to film a hapless customer consuming an equivalent amount in martinis. Not a pretty sight.

Campbell's resulting night in jail—he believed to be a first for the leader of a major

Canadian government—came with the ultimate ugly-souvenir. He was reprobard mag, shot given the opposition a dandy campaign poster ("Gordon is driving the economy?"). His dead wings already grace t-shirts, coffee cups and bumper stickers: spans of the pectorals are shaved to fight provincial cuts to health and social services again, if nothing else, this will scorch more anti-penalists than Campbell ever daubed them with.

The premier had been recovering alone after his wife, Shirley, returned to her Johnson's Bay home. Campbell marked his 55th birthday on Jan. 12 with a news conference drenched in exasperation agency. He'd reached the pinnacle of his ambition after almost 20 years in public life, only to risk it all on a foolish 17-kilo drive to his Hawaiian resort. Before an overwrought throng in the Vancouver cabinet offices, he tried to explain the inexplicable—not just to B.C.'s other honourable constituents, it seemed, but to himself and his wife, standing sullen and irascible in his side.

Nancy, looking every bit the school vice-principal she learned of her husband's arrest from media reports—of all his career and the rest of the province. Days later, Campbell was still at a loss to explain this massive somberly laconic in judgment. His shoulders sagged with the weight of the question. He was trying to rally back to Vancouver, he replied, to deliver the bad news personally. It was a pitiful lesson, one learned by previous bloodied office-holders who tried to swim with the sharkula circling gone are the days of controlling the storms.

He denied the intensity of his pain. His eyes welled, his voice wobbled at that first, sad news conference. A veiled reference to his father—a doctor and academic whose battle with alcohol led to his suicide when Campbell was a wee—ripped at the heart. "I have experienced within my own family, in the most painful way possible, the consequences of excessive drinking," he said,

struggling for control. "And that is what motivates my actions in this instance all the more disturbing and disappointing for myself and for those who know me."

Surfacing, we, jet somehow almost tragically, inexplicably, preordained. Only the winds of desperation varies from premier to premier. Glen Clark got nailed for building a debt; Campbell just got hammered. It was Dan Miller, a delightfully forthright New Democrat, who once called the premiership the most dangerous job in the province. He should know. Miller was the caretaker premier who filled the ugly void after Clark was forced from office in 1999. Seated then Johnson in 1991 and New Democrat Ujjal Dosanjh in 2000 also assumed

dangerous roles as interim premiers. They, at least, were spared from great expense, their scandal-plagued parties were ultimately destined for electoral doom.

There's no forgetting in B.C. politics No going back. Before it arrived, only to be charged in private life with insider trading, along with his brother Russell and chamber liaison Herb Doran. All three were acquitted of criminal charges of dumping shares, but all were sanctioned by the B.C. Securities Commission for the offence. Bill Vander Zalm in 1991 and later Clark were both forced to step down to fight criminal charges of tax evasion that they faced the premier's office for personal gain. Both were ultimately acquitted by judges who deemed their actions foolish but not criminal. Clark, however, was found to have breached sections of the legislature's conflict-of-interest act. The Liberals could hardly conceal their glee in snatching him \$53,000—a share of the cost of the conflict-of-interest. It was typical B.C. politics, now returning to hit Campbell in the navel.

Then there's straight arrow Mike Harcourt, forced from office in 1996. He paid the political price for a charity bingo scamming scandal perpetrated by others to build an NDP slush fund. Blaylock, who survived the party debacle to become a respected provincial statesman, is now referring to his life after almost dying on Nov. 30 as a disastrous full-freeze catalogue deck.

Campbell in opposition was a relentless Caliban, ruthless in his hostile condemnation of those failing his moral standards. Campbell in power had even less time for the work and magnified who disagreed with his vision. Now, his long-term survival requires more than his obvious conviction. It needs a seismic shift in personality, a display of the same compassion and empathy he's failing at the moment.

Campbell may pull it off. There's no obvious successor in the Liberal wings, and

"I have experienced within my own family, in the most painful way possible, the consequences of excessive drinking."

the political price for a charity bingo scamming scandal perpetrated by others to build an NDP slush fund. Blaylock, who survived the party debacle to become a respected provincial statesman, is now referring to his life after almost dying on Nov. 30 as a disastrous full-freeze catalogue deck.

The premier's job involvement raises issues equipped with a built-in curse. Yet Campbell is only the latest bit of damaged goods to drag, tamaciously, to the press, declining abdication to fulfill his party's agenda. That remains, inevitably, in the getting of the previous government's legacy.

Campbell may pull it off. There's no obvious successor in the Liberal wings, and

Campbell's nefarious sources—now stuck in the mud—spouting news conferences

as an opposition capable of forming a government. Still, lingering political wounds in B.C.'s backhouse clients tend to turn repulsive. This is contained in the aftermath of this apology offered in mid-meeting. The public is split about whether he should resign. About two-thirds and they accepted his apology. As telling, however, was a question posed and polled for CTV. Asked whether Campbell was a "hypocrite" who would have demanded the resignation of anyone in the circumstances, a solid 74 per cent agreed.

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That's a tall order in B.C., where polarized politics breed determined leaders. The kind of premier, in short, who blows up real good.



LIGHTS OUT FOR A FORMER STAR

Allan Rock announces he won't be in the race to replace Jean Chrétien

BILINGUAL, HANDSOME, smart, personable and successful, with a made-for-TV family to boot—an attractive lawyer wife and four status-seeking children, Allan Rock seemed to have everything needed for a high-flying political career. And since being elected in 1993, he's spent most of those years apprenticeshiping for the top job in three heavy-duty portfolios—justice, health-care industry. But somehow, the former high-pitched Toronto lawyer and Law Society of Upper Canada treasurer never lived up to the handy expectation. And last week, Rock made it official, formally abandoning his dream of replacing Jean Chrétien as prime minister—and, viciously judging that he didn't have the support or the possibility of attaining it, to make a credible showing against former finance minister Paul Martin. "This is not our time," he caustically.

With all eyes on Second term, he is not unknown in politics. Who could have thought Chrétien would govern so long if being voted out by John Turner in 1984? Turner himself had, under the wings after quitting the Trudeau cabinet in 1975. And is not Martin himself the acknowledged second best to Chretien in politics? So, naturally, Rock concluded in close that shot at his news conference last week. Throughout, he characterized his decision to back away from the fight as "not now" or not "at this time," before signing off with "it's a promise."

He sounded wistful as he said it—and wistful, given the obstacles he faces. In the short term, he has tested his relationship with Martin, the "prolificive fireman," Rock described him. The ranks and their sympathies are spilling for him. It started venomous last February when Rock accused Martin of fixing the rules to restrict the recruitment of new party members, same thing the Monday when Kavita, a flock supporter, blamed to "mental problem" because it hampered Rock's ability to maintain the contributions for new Liberals. "The very worst kind of politics," an angry Martin shot back. They've hardly had a kind word to say about each other since.



The minority winner said, This is not now—but left the door open for later

The two camps moved to parity through a skirmish following Rock's announcement, led out Martin-style. "They've been breaking the past. Paul has had Rock and Debby in the firm," Martin said. "They have been to Allan for dinner." The collision became strained because the dynamics of the day-waiting then contest was "With that competition over, a Rock defeat would be surprising if Martin failed to name 'the second most significant' Liberal in the post-Chretien government to come."

Rock would not speculate, but told Maclean's "I've worked with Paul for nine years in the cabinet; we've worked together

so closely, we put together the health budget, so there's no question I can work with any of my colleagues." His he would not in name Martin, partly, because otherwise, he would look opportunistic. Even if he were to find himself on the backbenches, Rock insisted he would remain in national politics.

A bigger hurdle is Rock's tainted reputation. When Turner, Chretien and Martin failed in their initial attempt to win the leadership, they accrued a terrible following of supporters who continued to believe the best men had been Rock's comp would snap that today. They acknowledge that, at best, the senior minister has been both haddish and erratic lately. While others may have been blessed with televisions, "Allan will be around with the insights in



his pocket," one bitterly said.

Handed the justice portfolio, he quickly shovelled out the Airbus affair. He launched an investigation of Brian Mulroney's alleged role in Air Canada's 1989 purchase of 34 Airbus planes—which ended up costing the government \$2 million after the former prime minister sold off Ottawa's 51 per cent stake in the company. Rock's cost estimate of \$1 million for setting up the inquiry and investigating it would run out to be almost \$2 billion all together.

Rock may be invincible, but now Martin and Co. expect more than respect for rule.

Even his achievement as Justice is discredited through the controversial gas registry program show up in his face this fall when Auditor General Sheila Fraser revealed that Rock's cost estimate of \$1 million for setting up the inquiry and investigating it would run out to be almost \$2 billion all together. To his credit, Rock did not attempt to evade responsibility last week. "I didn't go into politics just to live the life of leisure," he insisted. "I wanted to be seen," he explained. "Sheila will be running an inquiry to stop shorts from running," said one Liberal. For Maclean's, it's about positioning. By helping Chrétien, he's better off valuing him for the good of the party. But as for Rock, last week the light went out for the one of the party's nearly bright stars—perhaps for good.

close supporter. "He has the opportunity now to regroup and be a solid minister—then who knows what may happen?"

The crystal ball is clearer for the Liberal party internally. Rock's abandonment of Martin's immobility gives other reformers—especially notions, to name a few. The biggest beneficiary is Heritage Minister Sheila Copps, who is expected to assume that role in the last emerging. She placed that and markedly reduce any waste that place. With two ideological soulmates—Rock and Brian Tobin, the person industry minister who called it quits a year ago out of the running, she inherits the cause left wing of the party. Copps also has her ground in a speech to the Vancouver Board of Trade last week, saying she wants to be taken under equal for Liberal party candidates within two elections, recognize gay marriages and dramatically boost funding for post secondary education.

The pressure will also increase for Finance Minister John Manley to officially enter the party's annual assembly of rats and the Ottawa MP, who also serves as deputy prime minister, is the only cabinet member of course left. Borrowing art of God, he wrote, but, for there may be enough room for him to be unshamed. Rock's much aid for entering the business of immigrants at 25 and 30 per cent of delegates at the Nov. 13-15 convention, and in the open field, Manley may be able to achieve comparable numbers. "I think we'll attract some of Rock's engineers and supporters," Manley said. "My friends are or gracing and they tell me they're raising funds and they're raising support around the country, and nothing has happened that would change my inclination."

Others were also eyeing the leadership appointment last week. Justice Minister Marlene Cuthbert and Natural Resources Minister David Emerson may enter internal negotiations from Quebec and British Columbia respectively. In the end, the con victory may force the usual battle and battle, although the result may be preordained. "Sheila will be running an inquiry to stop shorts from running," said one Liberal. For Maclean's, it's about positioning. By helping Chrétien, he's better off valuing him for the good of the party. But as for Rock, last week the light went out for the one of the party's nearly bright stars—perhaps for good.

'AN ARDUOUS JOURNEY'

Family and friends of the missing gather for the Pickton preliminary hearing

DARIN SANGRET, 19 years a resident of Port Coquitlam, B.C., arrives at the city's provincial court last week seeking answers. "I have my suspicions about a lot of things," she says. It's the second day of the slow, faltering start to the preliminary hearing of pig farmer Robert (Willy) Pickton, accused of murdering 15 women. Sangret lives in the south end of PoCo, as the sub-suburb comprising a 45-minute drive east of Vancouver is known. She says pointedly that the Pickton family farmland Dominion Avenue—the site of a notorious investigation into Canada's largest serial killer case—is on the other side of the diagonal slash of CP Rail yard that divides the city. "I never felt good going over to that north side, and I never knew why," she says. "Maybe that's why."

Sangret originally from Regis, where she was a friend of Diane Dembski, one of 62 women on the official list of those missing from Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. Most of the murdered and the missing, like Dembski, had drug addictions by working in the sex trade. It's a transient, risk-filled existence Dembski vanished about 1990, though she wasn't reported missing until 1998. She's never been found, neither is she among the women Pickton is accused of killing. Sangret acknowledges she's surprised at the hearing yields answers about Dembski's disappearance, no easy task. "The biggest thing that I'm here for is to find out what's been really going on," she says. "I just believe that there's more people involved."

Rumours abound, but the public's need for answers won't be satisfied any time soon. The hearing, before Provincial Court Judge Davidstone, could go on for months. It has drawn the curious, friends and families of the missing, and thousands of reporters from the 180-unit courtroom. Reporters under pressure to provide details of the proceedings, to prevent news of the evidence from reaching potential juries if the case goes to trial.

Ensuring the publication ban is in force and in the face of intense international interest is a daunting challenge. The hearing is decided on the second day



Detained and international reporters outside the Port Coquitlam court house

the evidence was obtained or is presented in court. They could also face up to two years in jail for violating a court order. By then, most U.S. reporters have returned home. "It's not worth going to jail for," declared one from Seattle's KING-TV.

As the Crown builds its case, reporters take copious notes for future reference, and sworn to decipher the learned repertoire of legal jargon of the 55-year-old Pickton. He has made a bulletproof glass enclosure, the world's largest nearly-entire specimen of fish in a public aquarium. He is clean-shaven, and freshly scrubbed. Workish, strong-hair reaches below his collar. He seems to have engaged them in past press gatherings, where he often seemed oblivious and shift. He writes notes on a yellow legal pad or full legal pages of transcript. Occasionally, a grin cuts across his sharp features.

There are occasional glances of distress

from family members of the missing women, but most are forced to come down to come Ernst-Crey, whose sister Dawn is among the missing but not among the alleged murder victims, has attended many of the proceedings. He feels an obligation, he says, not only because of his sister, but because the family has had a tough hand to get through. Three years ago, the police knew little about the fate of the scores of women who had worked Vancouver's streets. "We wondered all along who they would be brought up to justice," he says. "It's been an arduous journey to this point."

Toronto journalist Steven Cameron is tracking the trial for forthcoming book—one of several being written about the murders. One reason Cameron, whose previous books have been about politics and white collar crime, was attracted to the project is the unlikely cast who overcame years of official indifference to file the issue with the public and judicial agenda. "In this case there are lots of heroes, lots of missing people," she says. Among them she sees Vancouver Mayor Larry Campbell, a former crusading



Pickton, in a bulletproof glass booth, appears clean-shaven and freshly scrubbed

defence attorney of B.C., workers and cops in the Downtown Eastside, like extrapolator advocate Rev Ruth Wright of the First United Church, family members of the missing, and many of the street women themselves. "Everybody turns," Cameron says, "there are people who tried to make a difference."

For the family members there is some comfort in knowing the search for answers has formally opened on a second front—in a Port Coquitlam courtroom. The final point, until now, has been far from the

downtown courthouse, across the tracks in Delta, in the Delta Police Department. There, at the Pickton farm, the slow grind of justice is not a quiet legal question but a literal truth. Teams of investigators, heavy exfoliant operations, forensic scientists and archaeological students dig and sift and sort huge mounds of filth. Dark mounds of earth flew off conveyor to be sifted for evidence and human remains—a silent, relentless search that started last February and may continue for most of 2003.

On the day before the hearing begins, a paper service was held in the longhouse of the nearby Nuu-chah-nulth Nation for investigators and lived ones of the missing, many of whom were of Aboriginal ancestry. "Our spiritual folks had teachings for them and prayers for them, words of encouragement for them," says Crey, who is from the Sto:lo First Nation. He says it was especially touching that 40 of the archaeologists present the farm attended the service. "I think we were young people and the Indians were young women in their 20s," Crey says with a gentle smile. "Something about that made me feel right."

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TURNING OLD BOOKS INTO GOLD

Victoria's Abebooks is a global success on the Net, writes KEN MACQUEEN

FOR \$53,760, you can own a 1951 copy of *The Catcher in the Rye*, signed by the reclusive author J.D. Salinger himself. If that seems steep, consider the asking price for 1936 galaxy prints of Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind*—for \$136,550. Who's doing more than a deal? On offer among the 40 million titles in Abebooks of Victoria—which bills itself as “the world’s largest marketplace for second-hand, rare and out-of-print books”—are 12,404 copies of Hardy Boys mysteries, a pulp favorite for generations of young readers. A well-thumbed copy of *The Tower Taxman* goes for \$1.54. But among first editions from 1927 could set you back \$4,370.

There’s gold in old books, as any collector can tell you. The challenge was matching buyer and seller—a daunting task given that most individuals, for the right customer to walk into the shop and make a purchase, had to trade catalogues and book catalogues. No more. In six years, Abebooks has built itself into a world power

by naming the Internet into a global book bazaar. Some one million customers have used Abebooks, annually spending \$75 million to \$100 million. Corporate clients yet to fully embrace used, but they’re gradually changing how those words are sold.

For founder Ruth Waters, the “great ah-ha” came in 1995, as the B.C. government systems analyst explored a mind-numbing briefing about a computer project. He named out the racing to-sell-on-a-problem that offendedit his programmer’s sensibilities: the inefficient answerer lists his wife Cathy faced finding out-of-print titles for customers in her suburban Victoria home. Books were “Bang, it just went off in my head,” says Waters. “Why not use the Net to sell, search and sell used books online?”

I remember thinking, that is a really good idea. I’m going to forget this moment, and it’s going to change everything.” By 1996, Waters and

Waters’ Delta James had put together

prices for two titles signed by their authors



hardware, a set of cubicles and a banquette row of desks—arranging tables, Webheads and bibliophiles. The decor, just this side of steely, featured staffers’ landscape photographs, and by graphs in the lobby showing an upward-spiraling in sales.

Brett Jones, the 45-year-old CEO, is found in a sunroom outside, having just rendered an office response in three new staff members. “That’s progress,” he says. Jones, an MIT business graduate who has managed B.C. tech success in MicroData Solutions Inc., joined Abebooks last year. At the time, the company already had a stable of more than 5,000 book sellers. “I was blown away by the success this little company had achieved—and had the potential to achieve,” Jones says.

Used-book selling is a precarious enterprise, but the company has a business model that eliminates the riskiest and most expensive part the books themselves. It carries no inventory, unlike other retail and Internet giants like Indigo Books & Music or Amazon.com. Instead, it matches buyers with sellers—much like eBay, the virtual auction house. It collects a listing fee from its sellers—between US\$25 and US\$100 depending on the number of titles—and takes a five-per-cent cut of the sale price. In exchange, the company provides sellers with free software to inventory and list their

stock, and offers tools and other support. It has also struck deals allowing the option of selling on the Amazon and Barnes & Noble sites, through some independent dealers.

Jones operates with a bookshop’s flexibility, despite revenue growth of 40 to 50 per cent annually. Abebooks remains a private company, majority-owned by employees. It has never sought venture capital to finance its growth. It runs with a lean staff of about 10—15 of them operating from Germany after the company bought JustBooks a year ago. While the German staff were flown to Victoria in December for a Christmas gathering, they were billeted with local staff. “We never get caught up in the dot-com craze,” says Jones. “We’re profitable, but we’re not profitable because we’ve been too cautious in our business model.”

That model has had a profound impact on the industry. Among Abebooks’ first customers was Wells Books of Victoria, run by

“We never got caught up in the dot-com craze,” says James. “We’re profitable because we’ve been cautious.”

Wells was an early convert to the Abebooks formula prior to two U.S. first editions.

The site’s most established used and antique dealers. Part-owner Jeff Boni is sitting in a Wellbooks office as glassy-eyed clients with books in hand return to him to open her laptop, a tool she considers now essential. Wellbooks had just established its own Internet site when Abebooks came calling in 1996. “But there’s something about home page,” Boni says. “We were just a little more in the news right.”

The Internet now accounts for about 30 per cent of the much sales, mostly through the much of Abebooks. Foreign language titles that might never sell in Victoria have gone to customers half the world away. Antiquarian books that languished in the basement also find buyers far up glow this afternoon. She acquired a 1,000-volume collection of books dealing merely whaling themes. It’s almost too good to call on the Internet, she says. It’s the kind of freight that can draw willing customers to the store.

For better or worse, though, Abebooks has freed some sellers from the need for a storefront presence. About two-thirds of its dealers have home-based collections. John and Susan West closed their Tales book shop in Belleville, Ont., this year after giving up Abebooks. As most of they enjoyed their shop, with \$40,000 turnover, the business changed dramatically in 15 years. The web in trade selling serious buyers dropped sharply, says John. “The reason, I suspect, was because people were doing their shopping on line.” The Wests now operate from their home in nearby Peterborough, not that the location is relevant. About 75 per cent of their Internet sales are to the U.S. Old books are no longer a shiny laundry. A name from the 1960s on most-of-their track records in the U.S. found a buyer in Ireland. “Who would your market,” says West, “the more specialized, the better.”

There are things companies can’t replicate, the personal bookstore culture, the feel of a volume, the thrill of an unexpected find, the thrill of finding and sign, as though the bookshelves are breathing. Jim Waters isn’t one to blame Abebooks for the disappearance of such things. “They’re not a cause,” he says. “They’re a symptom. I suppose, of the way people like to shop these days.” The reach of dot com may change, he says, “but books are here forever.” ■



RE-SLICING THE PIE

The world has reached a turning point, and America's golden age is ending

If your personal wealth is invested in gold and oil stocks, you might well assume some nice profits from a retreat in inflation.

Manco and Canada have been gaining; the euro zone has been declining, and China and, to a lesser extent, South Korea have been eating everybody else's lunch.

If your personal wealth is invested in real estate, you might well be hoping that the recent surge in home prices are signs inflation is coming back strongly.

What's happening? Is the deflation born in Japan, that invaded by China into an epidemic, becoming a global pandemic? Or do we face a series of 1970s-style stagflations? And what should investors do with their money?

A good way to start is to think about the global economy—how it grows, and how it's used. It's size expands every year, incrementally, but even in high periods it does manage to grow. It's divided in various ways, but for our purposes what matters is who shares gains among countries, and among producers.

Showing by country, the US has enjoyed the longest peace since over the First World War in the production per capita growth between primary producers on the one hand—farmers, miners, oil and gas companies and loggers—and other goods and services suppliers on the other. Primary producers have been mostly losing share in the mix of urban life, but occasionally they regain ground from industries, finance, exports and white-collar workers.

What's more, his gone on for generations—or even decades—since people come to think the pattern is permanent. Hence more risks and rewards come when key turning points arrive—either in terms of major changes in the growth rate of the total pie, or in terms of the relative growth rates of the various slices. We are at one of those points. The pie is being divided differently, and this new method of apportionment looks to be an early sign of the knife.

Over the past decade, the country by

country share of the global economic pie has begun to become flat: growth in the U.S. share has stalled, export's share has shrunk,

Manco and Canada have been gaining, the euro zone has been deflating, and China and, to a lesser extent, South Korea have been eating everybody else's lunch.

How do economists calculate these national shares of the world economy? By using each country's GDP data as calculated in their own currencies, then converting them into US dollars. That means a Korea. That means the US \$ dollar will, at some point, cease to be the global store value. It also means the current growth/best market is a foretaste of bigger problems ahead.

incentive alone GDP grew fast per year, but when currency fell against the greenback by five per cent, lost its share of the global economy per year, even though its internal growth rate was above the average for the world.¹ There is another rather path-dependent power parity—our own to adjust for currency devaluation, but it's subject to many qualifications that it's hard to get agreement on how the data are prepared.

The Economic Constitution, the best known book about Florida, is Big Mac index, which adjoins data world-wide according to the local press (for a McDonald's Big Mac) the same what the sky index has done for "honor thana McDonald's itself, whose stock long-angled to make year low.)

Looking up the production front, the primary producers' share of the global gross during the magnum 1870s, but then thereafter for two decades, over the Resipes and Thorburn inflation-choked inflation and soured real results. Commodity lists show

The 19th century was Britain's; the 20th America's. It looks meaner and more

The 19th century was Britain's; the 20th America's. It looks more and more as if this one will be East Asia's, led by China.

The new century has brought booms in accounting like China's that are moving from their World Headquarters—meaning lag growth as commodity consumption grows—the industrial world has been won over by accountants and slow growth. The past year has seen a remarkable swing in commodity prices. Ingenious cycles, such as price triggers of generalized inflation, but not at once, because primary products—other than oil and sugar—have such small shares of total economic output.

The 19th century was Britain's, the 20th America's. It looks more and more as if the one will be East Asia, led by China and (if the socialist North Korean model survives) South Korea. That means the U.S. dollar will, at some point, cease to be the global store of value. It also means the current grassroots bear market is a foretaste of bigger problems ahead.

some of America's most visual elites. While geopolitics might the highest the Cold War, the US dollar – far from a haven of trouble – is steadily sliding. The Halmstad "dog that didn't bark" says a dollar's game is up.

The American way trend suddenly became the US as it is dynamic, democratic, adaptable. But innovation should be redundant: their response to the US, reducing them to power to 1990-style growth models, is going back to home – communism (just another cold and inefficient) and the deadlocked oil and energy hypothesis of the wealth-building process during the Golden Age of American Growth. America's lunch is coming back.

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CITY OF VIGNETTES

It's like a jazz medley, but nothing quite fits

HE WANTS TO SHOW ME where the once-church comes, so we walk down Avenue to see the late incarnation of Sholem. Discard first hand. And rare enough, here at Atwater, René-Lévesque Boulevard stretches, emerging on the other side in Dorchester, a wonderful parlour tract that only hints at the deep incision made that lie just below the surface.

When the name of Dorchester Boulevard was changed from that of a long-dead British governor to that of an equally dead Separatist premier, the city of Montréal—a bastion of English-language and through whose boundaries the boulevard, just coincidentally, happened to pass—exhaled in gidd. And this invisible barrier running down the middle of Avenue had become a de facto demarcation line between Montréal's colonial past and its national aspirations.

Atwater may be one of the great divides of Canadian urban reality, but you would almost swear it had been ledgers and its Anglican church and children's hospital. Nothing really changes when you come, and yet, everything does. It is as subtle as a wobble in the slope of the street signs, so profound as to divide legitimacy of a city—and a country—left; upon fault lines such as these.

I can chart the rise and fall of Quebec culture on the look in my brother's eyes. When times are good and separation is in remission, he has a certain calm patrolling our classes—when he speaks about his adopted city, "I love Montréal," he says, and he means it.

However, when the separationists are fire-bombing Second Cup coffee carts, threatening link rioters or forcing Eaton's to drop the anglo progressive to heresy—"We of the Apostles!" (she only said we'd ever won over, I believe), when the résumés ratchets up pols and the arguments grow as volatile as they are repetitive—on days like that, living in Montréal can be wearisome. "I love Montréal," he

says, but now it seems less an evaluation than a summum, as though he is trying to convince himself, as much as anyone.

"There are good cities, and there are bad," he says. "There are days when this city grows down on you and all you can think of is escape. And then, you will have a moment—a Montreal moment—and you'll realize that there is nowhere else on earth you would rather be."

Intrigued, a group city, had this fallen like chessboard squares. Any segregated, divided, and defined by means of language, race, and space. Here, in the west, the old moneyed outpost of Jewish merchants—children of the Ringers who never won status. Here the Jewish enclave, a presence almost as old as that of the English. In smaller circles, a pocket of Portuguese, a generous helping of Haitians, a full sweep of Italians and everywhere else, bling the grips, the French, the French who first built the city, who first claimed the island, and who now want it back.

Block this city into careful patterns and you receive quasi-national formulas. Now, non-stop downtown gives it two or three good whacks. Look again. What you have is a jumbled mess of contradictions, where each going quite far, and nothing quite makes sense. What you have is Montréal.

Trying to understand Montréal is a bit like trying to understand an egg. It should be another Bellini, but it isn't. It could have been another Paris, but it wasn't.

As the second largest French-speaking city in the world, Montréal is the centre of French culture on the continent, and yet it

Upscale boutiques jostle with establishments like Le Monde du Sexe and Club Super Sexe. Confused? So is Montréal.

is a distinctly North American—sternly American—city. It is Old World and New Canadian and Canadian. Neither fish nor fowl, but a bit of both.

When I tally up the ledger of my life solar, when I take stock of apprehensions, separations and judgments buried, I am forever grateful to the gods of happenstance for one particular thing. I was 15 in Montréal. A whole age for the city cannot be imagined. A week later from small-town Alberta, I spent my 16th summer as a volunteer with a conservation-trail work crew just north of the city and I continued to sprawl in mud mire in Montréal every work schedule and spare funds would allow.

I remember Montréal as a giant jambalaya, all light and sound and motion. It is one of the oldest cities in Canada; it is also one of the youngest.

My brother—Albert-horn and basswoods mixed, just as I was—has beaten Montréal for 10, 11. Has it really been 12 years already? He came to the city to study music at McGill, he received his doctorate and is now running a laudably tight checklist of things. My brother is Belgian now—the only truly French-speaking Ferguson our family branch of the clan has ever produced—and his work as a composer and arranger has him in the fields of Quebec's francophone music scene but though he flings between two languages and two worlds, he is still not "of the island." And he never will be. "Basically, I am an Anglophone whose first language is English," he says with a smile. "No matter how well I speak French, I will never be Québécois, because I don't share the same cultural references that people who were born here do. I didn't grow up with the same TV shows or learn the same music that they did."

My brother sometimes stumbles over words in his first language, groping through French for the correct term in his native English. Like Anglie Montréalien everyone he uses the verb "poss" for too much ("we'll poss by a department store the way back") He



is neither fish nor fowl, but a bit of both.

My brother and I walk the streets of Montréal, among the various inns and outposts, and after several days of this, I am more baffled than enlightened. The scribbled messages I write to myself on the hand-drawn maps my brother gives me aren't much help. City Saint Lawrence, Jewish, rich. The Plateau: good coffee, young arties. Mount Royal Village: where the artists go after they have had.

The streets are slick with rain and the alleysways are dark. Music spills out of the doorways. As the scents and sounds mix, only ours around us, we walk "The Main," St-Laurier Boulevard, a traditional divide between the French city and the English, before the boundaries begin to erode. It is the main street of the immigrant experience, a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural mix that took root to face the notion of racialization alone was even invented.

Down Ste-Catherine Street with its fancy shops and bigger joints, past its sequined pep shows and its energy-burned teenagers looking for handouts. On Ste-Catherine, upscale boutiques and maternity shops join

thee-ere, mega-monger of Montréal with its 27 suburbs, mainly, only succeeded in increasing the number of houses within houses. Neighbourhoods that are bourgeoisie, bourgeois that are middle-class, they multiply with a certain Sorcerer's Apprentice-like determination.

The more you try to reduce Montréal to a single reading, the more it seems to slip free and fade again. It's enough to make your head spin, though to make you long for a master plan, a single comprehensive view of the city, a panacea that encompasses and contains everything you need to know but there is no panacea. There isn't even much of a view.

Montréal has an adorable skyline and not much of a shape. In fact, one of the greatest tested truths is that Montréal—God help me—is not an attractive place. It may be beguiling and fashionable and historic, it may have *la belle époque* and *je ne sais quoi*, but in and of itself, it is not an attractive city. That is why people hold the dogged belief that it is an attractive city—all empirical evidence to the contrary—is perhaps best explained in terms of a willful suspen-

sion of disbelief. Ah, but the Emperor has no clothes, and Montreal may be ugly, but it's not pretty.

The acclaimed travel writer Joe Morris discovered that during a cross-Canada trip, "One of the anomalies of Montreal is that it's among very beautiful. It ought to be, but isn't." Even the more laudatory writers, such as Cormac and St. Denis, had, she noted, "a tiny, miskinful look to them."

Montreal has a momentum, but very little worth gazing down upon. The skyline, as noted, is nondescript. (How many people could honestly recognize a photograph of Montreal? Unlike, say, Vancouver or Toronto or Quebec City or Ottawa, whose profiles are both distinctive and distinct.) The best view in Montreal is away from the city, inland, toward the wooded hills of Mont Royal.

The former Beaubien "castle" with its phony towers and flimsy Gothic facade might be fine as a folly on a rich man's estate, but plunked down on Peel Street it looks like tattered compost. Buildings such as the Chateau Champlain (and with its associate partner of half-cross windows—

It may have *savoir faire* and *je ne sais quoi*, but the unstated truth is that Montreal—God help me—is not an attractive place

called the "cheese grater" by locals—seem to have been put up at random, with neither rhyme nor reason, nor any concern for context. In the oldest section of town, facing Notre-Dame Basilica—indeed so beautiful, so graceful, that its Provençal-fish arches converted to Catharism before he died just to be buried under its floor—right across the road from that architectural masterpiece is a big black office tower, looking like a monolithic slab from 2001's *A Space Odyssey* that has somehow lost its way.

Tower squares, centuries old, have been paved over as parking lots. Expressways have been elevated—in every sense of the word—and now intrude through historic neighborhoods without regard for the surrounding surroundings, sometimes clipping right past church towers. The thinking be-

hind this, and it manifests itself in most cities through rarely with the vigour of Montreal, is something of a modern cultism: cars have the precedence over people. Why this should be has never been explained, but there is a authoritarianism self-justifying, even in this, the City of Churches.

Mark Twain, that old skeptic, was quite pleased by Montreal because, in his words, "You can't throw a brick without breaking a churchwindow." That's wouldn't be the kind of it today. Church entrances are last-latched billboards and fast food outlets, left to sink slowly out of sight like a core into compost.

At once devout and godless, secular and spiritual, Montreal is a sacrament of both wine and the flesh. It is energized by optimism and also unfeeling bitterness than that. Montreal is a city of extremes. A city that flings back, that tells backs. "The only way to see Montreal," I have discovered, is while in motion. If it is not meant to be looked up at, nor down upon, in a manner to be walked through. As Joe Morris himself wrote to me, "Incongruity and paradox are but of essence." The once stately indifference may have been chattered into near oblivion—and that is just one of the city's many sins—but there are others besides to Montreal.

Come down from the mountain, ignore the hideous highways, and turn instead to the residential streets, with their Victorian houses, row-on-row, crowding the curb, and their wrought-iron railings that stand up to second- and third-floor flats. These narrow buildings, so distinct to Montreal, were built along the same type of ribbon-like property lines first established during the French régime. Building this and deep, leafy dugout houses close to the street as they could. The stairs were then put on the outside to save space.

Se these stairways, these beautiful stairs, though they seem to have been carved partly for aesthetic appeal, are actually serving about as an incentive to stay within property lines. It is a heavy form of an encroy. Like a transplant whose roots assume the shape of the container it has been placed in, these railways resist and tame to take on the shape of the invisible boundaries that surround them. And the city that contains them.



Will Ferguson is the author of *I Was a Magazine Writer*, a travel memoir that includes his time working north of Montreal.



YELLOWSTONE TO YUKON

A proposed 3,400-km wildlife corridor stirs up passions—for and against

ON ONE OF THE FINAL LEGS of its 3,400-km trek between Wyoming's Yellowstone National Park and Alaska's Lake Clark, Karen Heuer watched helplessly as her travelling companion and life mate, Louise Allison, struggled to follow him across the churning, horse-chilling Alsek River in the northern B.C. Rockies. Allison had overaged woman only halfway across when she drifted past the point where Heuer knew the fastest rapids had washed her and a narrow, jagged canyon—risking serious injury and perhaps death. "It was my best friend in there," Heuer would later write. "and I was aware that responsibility had seized my heart." At last, Allison escaped the river's grasp and, after a few tussles, hocked bottom-hard enough to break the surface of the water and land on shore. "Thank you," she

muttered as Heuer hugged and thanked her. "that's my home."

For Heuer, the drama on the river provoked some soul-searching about the expedition she undertaken in support of a conservation proposal to create one a conservation corridor from Yellowstone to the Yukon. It was one thing to put his own life on the line, holding, riding and canoing through wilderness where ferocious storms, the threat of mudslides and encounters with grizzly bears were an almost daily fact of life. It was quite another to put those to the test. But Allison, 34, who first met Heuer, also 34, in kindergarten in Calgary, again braved the harsh and cold climate. She and Heuer trekked up to Bear Lake in Bob Marshall Wilderness Area, Montana,

passions for what is often dubbed the YYZ initiative. Allison joined him in 1999 far the most perilous part of the trip, from Jasper National Park west-central Alberta to northwestern British Columbia. This spring, the Calgary-based couple will embark on a similar adventure, following the migration route of the 120,000-strong for caribou herd from central Yukon to northwestern Alaska.

As with YYZ, the motive for the canning is to raise public awareness—this time about predators. George Bush administration wants to lift the prohibition on drilling for oil in the caribou's Alaskan calving grounds near the Arctic Ocean. And again, Heuer and Allison will trek up the spur for over 3,000 km along potentially treacherous terrain. "Accepting physical risks is all part of it."



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Wyoming and Alaska A snowshoer and Allie snowshoeing off along Moose River canyon in BC, crossing below Kluane Falls in B.C.'s Mestman Provincial Park

explains Allison. "Otherwise you become paralyzed by fear."

As Heater recounts in his recently published book, *Walking the Big Wild: From Yellowstone to the Yukon on the Grizzly Bear's Trail*, fear is a frequent companion when you venture into the untamed spaces that still exist on the edges of modern society. A wildlife biologist who worked a summer path studies in Banff National Park and French National Park in the southwest corner of the Rockies, Heater was inspired to do his task after learning about the Y2Y initiative, which was first proposed in the early 1990s. It has since evolved into a transnational campaign involving over 360 conservation organizations. The sites behind Y2Y in that wide ranging paradigm at the top of the food chain, such as bears, wolves and wolverines, require extremely large habitats. For example, scientists estimate that, for grizzlies to thrive, at least 2,000 individual bears must be able to interact to avoid inbreeding and to absorb and recover from food shortages, disease and disturbances like fire. To sustain that number of grizzlies, they say, would require more than 120,000 sq. km of land—an area 20 times the size of Banff National Park.

String adds that acreage of land is as sensible, so conservationists propose a series of corridors linking existing parks and reserves across coastal Wyoming to the north to Yukon. In the course of the 2-million sq. km expanse of the Y2Y study area, that

means creating corridors of passageways up to 50 km in width through which animals can, in effect, move from one wilderness island to another. Already, though, development pressures are again like the flow Valley, near Banff, Alta., have checked off such routes.

Heater wanted to experience the terrain first-hand and drew inspiration to the Y2Y vision. On June 6, 1996, he set out from Yellowknife's Macmillan Hot Springs in the company of his former girlfriend, Maxine Achurch, and his 14-year-old son, old biker colic, Webster. The plan called for 170 travel days over an 18-month period through the Rocky, Columbia and Mackenzie mountain ranges. Most of the trips were bear-hunting, but there would also be 400 km of riding, 500 km of paddling, well over 100 hours of backcountry skiing. There were, as well, several repeat conversations along the way to promote the Y2Y vision through town hall meetings and talking to the media.

Unhappily, the team of ploughing the trail left it in their wake barely in speaking terms. Their bickering only intensified on the trail and, after about 100 km, Achurch

gritted out. Heater and Webster continued on until June, after which Heater knew he needed human company for the tricky slope-and-panorama crossing that lay ahead. Two old friends, Jay Le Nevez and Allison, joined him for the purpose, with Allison waiting on the first push to the Yukon. Early on, Heater decided to rely on gravity trails as his best guide through the wilderness. To his surprise, he found fresh evidence of the bears, including soil and pine cones, along 80 percent of the route. There were also several encounters of the dead and/or buried kind. At one point, a 400 kg grizzly walked within 10 m of Heater, who had stopped and sat, praying. Webster wouldn't bark until the bear passed by (his prayers were answered). At another, he became aware a black bear was stalking him, as if looking for an easy meal. With only a crook separating him and the bear, Heater unleashed a torrent of screams and readily used radio across the distance. One hit the bear with a shot, sending the animal scurrying. "After a few minutes," recalls Heater, "I could hear the creek over the sound of my heart beat again and, snapping up some nerve, started my way back to camp."

At other times, Heater and Allison huddled along avalanche zones, ever aware of the apocalyptic that could ensue at any moment. "I feel small on these slopes," Heater later wrote in his journal, "looking up, always looking up, waiting for the world to come crashing down. All around me are mountains

of the danger river coast, places where the debris from past avalanches lies in jumbles of broken trees and chunks of ice and snow. It's impossible to get across such devastation unscathed, and we crawl around them on all fours, freezing as fast as we can."

A few months later, the snow long gone, Heater and Allison faced a different challenge—swarms of bugs so intense that even headlamps, long pants and thick-decked shirts couldn't protect them. "This evening," Heater wrote in his journal, "I lie on my back sweating as a wasp on the navel a roof mite and mosquito bite insects eat its way through. It makes me so happy I can't help but wonder if I'm already going a little crazy."

Overall, Heater was impressed by how much of the Y2Y area remained wild. Creating the proposed corridor, he says, has less to do with preserving what exists than restoring and reclaiming land. Yet there are some stark exceptions. Perhaps the worst, says Heater, is the Crownland Passageway of southwestern Alberta and southeastern British Columbia, where a power mix of logging, mining, mining and oil and gas development is putting wildlife on the fist.

Not surprisingly, the Y2Y concept has run with vigorous opposition from some resource companies in the region. During his community presentations, Heater had to contend with a major campaign by the K-C Forest Alliance, a lobby group funded by the logging industry. Among other things, the alliance claimed the Y2Y initiative would result in the loss of 80,000 jobs—a sum 3.5 billion in provincial gross domestic product annually. Heater says such figures are based on the assumption that Y2Y means the creation of one large 1.2-million sq. km park, instead of a massive network covering only a fraction of the land. While there would be significant economic impact, Heater cautions that, with proper planning and foresight, resource extraction, human activity and wildlife can all coexist.

For Heater and Allison, the Y2Y trip was an affair of the heart in more ways than one. The trip confirmed they weren't really friends, the couple wed this fall. With the upcoming expedition to Alaska, which Allison intends to document on film and Heater hopes to research in another book, they are taking their partnership to the next level. "It feels like a real privilege to be able to work on projects like this," observes Allison. "And I think we've just scratched the surface." ■

Fear is a frequent companion when you venture into the untamed spaces that still exist on the edges of society

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'SEND THEM LOTS OF CANDY'

CBC's latest comedy star trashes U.S. television and solves the Iraq problem

SEAN CULLEN, comedian, ventriloquist and facial contortionist, first made his name during 11 years as the comedy trencher with Cocky and the Faux Pops. No cow was too sacred to be poked by the no-holds-barred stage act of prancing, winging comics, round ad out by Phil Nichol and Greg Hale. But in 1998 the Pops disbanded, and the Peterborough, Ont.-born Cullen, 27, took a solo road. Since then, he's appeared on a range of U.S. programs, including The Ellen Show and The Tonight Show with Jay Leno. A two-person co-writing act with the CBC failed to get him the TV job he had wanted. Cullen capped off 2001 by hosting the Canadian Awards for television achievement, and now he's the star of *The Sean Cullen Show*, a madcap CBC-TV variety program that begins a six-week run last week. Associate Editor Douglas Hinewell sits down with Cullen to explore the roots of his comedy.

What were you like as a kid?

"I was much smaller than I am now, and I had a bigger head. Ha, I was very shy. I wasn't the class clown, like my brother."

Your new show is set on a stage designed to be your home. There's a weird guy who lives in your cellar, a next-door housekeeper, an annoying door-to-door canvasser, an interlocutor and a next-door neighbour bent on ruining your life. What does all this say about your life growing up?

It says that I watched a lot of television. Most of the stuff that we'd draw on for these characters is an homage to television. It's got elements of the familiar that have been twisted in strange ways.

So where does the idea of pantomime fit in your first episode bit?

There's a weird element to the show in the old sense that there'd be some kind of silly, happy song, so I thought we'd start it. No body's an amateur to pantomime—and it's probably a big part of a lot of people's lives.

Other cast members include two entities in the audience who interrupt you. The first thing they say about the show is, "This thing sucks." What did critics ever do to you? Nothing! I just thought I would do a few people's critiques of the show by having critics there at the first place.

What were you expecting?

I knew it's a weird show, and I thought it would be good to have someone who the audience would identify with, who would say, before it got too weird, "This is weird," so they know I know that that is weird.

Your second episode features a calamity that grants you wishes, but at the cost of a figure skater exploding, somewhere in the world. What have you got against figure skaters?

I've nothing against figure skaters. These are the least offensive people in the world, and I thought they should suffer the most.

Did you pull the legs-off insects on a KMF?

Only figure skaters...tiny figure skaters that I had built out of wax.

Are you still involved with GST?

That's done now. GST is a very conservative network. Twisted by an Anglia, LAG, White, Teas-Ranger. Generally, that's not me.

What is you?

No, thank, Teas-Ranger. When I was asked to "come up with a show," I cracked my brain: "How am I going to make an imaginative, interesting show that I can sell to CBS?"

And then we turn on the TV and CBS is showing *Holler, Your Lungs!* Who thought of that? I mean, who didn't think that, more likely? It's just a guy in a cowboy hat who looks people. I was trying too hard, I think, or I was maybe too creative for that network. It's kind of soul-destroying.

What's the difference between a King for an American audience and a Canadian one?

I'd like to say not much, but I think Cana-

dians are better and, they grasp absurdity a lot more—they embrace it. America follows a very simple format in America. Canadians, I think, are willing to go out on a limb with you a little further.

In one of the scripts we wrote for CBS, I played a priest who was brought from a missionary where I trained dogs. I moved to Boston to work on an urban parish. Just as soon as we sat, "Here's a priest," they said. "No, I don't think I don't throwin' going to see any priests on TV." And we said, "Well, why? It's a job-like step other, you know? In Twisted by an Anglia, you have angels coming in. Humans that not consider them as real human beings?" But no, it was just not an option. That was a bit depressing.

Are there things you find absurd about being Canadian?

I don't know if it's that we're absurd, necessarily, but that generally we're obsessed. When Britain and America say, "We're going to invade Iraq," people go, "Oh, look out! There's trouble brewing!" But in Canada, we don't have the power, militarily or economically, to affect the world that way.

How would you solve the Iraq problem?

I think you just keep sending over letters, maybe and lots of charity. Laughing at the bush medicines, for the most part, except refined care is much better than laughter if you're seriously ill. Making people who take chemicals too seriously is probably a good idea.

As a member of *Corky and the Juice Pops*, you once drove 27 hours straight from Ottawa to Winnipeg for a gig because you were the only one who could drive. What's your worst memory of that trip?

One of the other guys had a temporary permit, and I said, "Well, I'll be in as and you drive for while." He got behind the wheel, accelerating, and immediately spun that giant cargo van three times. It ended up facing the wrong way on the highway. And I said, "You know what? I'll take over."



What's it like as a performer trying to make it in Canada?

It's hard. There are lots of comics in Canada, and somehow's got to this that this is a good career to get into. Didn't know hand. But it's starting power, and striking with it, knowing that if you do all your work you might get \$10. The hardest thing is going to your parents and asking for money when you're broke—and having to get things signed off the floor until you've, like, 90.

What is one thing you wouldn't want people to know about you?

That I can fly. But, I don't want people to know that because then they'll want me to deliver things, and I really can't be bothered.

What will your listeners say?

"Thanks for watching. Good night!" How about that?



GUN DOWN THIS SYSTEM

The critics are right. The federal firearms registry just doesn't work.

I USED TO rag my husband about getting rid of his rifles and shotguns until the sun over the horizon started to burn in patches during the daytimes. They were hunting, because they had eaten their meat and prey. And when they got home, a kill was well within 100 m from where we stood, when the neighbouring farmer advised us to be very careful outside our country home. I had a glimmer of the gulf between urban and rural Canada. But I never imagined when the Liberals they collated a kill with waiting for you to register all gun owners—and then off long guns it has always been uncomfortable with the gun lobby that assumption that there is a right to bear arms, their inaccuracy assumes, their revised hyperbole. Registration is the Canadian way, I thought. It will curb gun violence, I thought. Anyway, what harm can it do? I was an idiot.

Anyways who handles with the Canadian Firearms Centre would not have been surprised by the sudden government's scathing report last month. In 1993, the Justice Department predicted the program would cost \$2 million to implement; it now turns out the tally will be at least \$1 billion by 2004–2005. Five provinces have opted out of the scheme. Eight states scrapped. Software and forms have been repeatedly revised, full costs have never been calculated.

Warts, departments and agencies do not work together—so the program could not focus on its intended target of high-risk owners. Instead, it has enveloped an estimated 2.3 million gun owners, of whom 1.9 million are now licensed, in an estuary dragnet to fill our farms. How hard is it? The entire system is 99 percent of the licensor and registrant applications contain errors or omission. "The federal–provincial system looks down—and the federal government is responsible for managing this," says Senator Lowell Murray, chair of the Senate national finance committee, which has presented registry costs since March 1997. "It is a mess, a shambles."

So how did we get in this mess? The fish-and-government has required handgun regis-

stration since 1954. Over the decades, the registry has been centralized, guns such as automatic weapons have been restricted or prohibited, penalties have been increased for the use of guns in serious crimes—and, in 1995, Firearms Acquisition Certificates came into effect: purchasers were screened and their purchases recorded. In the early 1990s, these restrictions were expanded: anyone buying any gun had to pass a safety course, provide detailed personal information, undergo a screening check and face a wait-a-day–long waiting period. The idea was to accumulate a lot of money and guns.

Then the Liberals decided to register everyone and everything. Philip Strelak, a former University of Toronto criminologist (and now research at New Zealand's Victoria University of Wellington), points out that 80 percent of Canadians gun deaths in 1999 were suicides. And the registry is a simple approach to an complicated problem and police tend to see evidence from legally acquired long guns, urban police most grappling with the proliferation of illegal handguns. "We have to address the social underpinnings of the illegal handgun market," Strelak says. "We need to stop enraging that regulation like the gun registry will solve that problem."

First, we must clarify the problem. There were 534 homicides in Canada in 2001. Firearms were used in one-third, just over one-quarter of the firearms deaths—or 46 households—were committed with a rifle or shotgun. Two-thirds of the firearms deaths involved handguns. (The rest included such guns as sawed-off weapons.) Among the recovered handguns used in murder/suicide

Mendelsohn says Ottawa's rulers appear unable to broker deals with rural Canada. 'The Liberals are a party of urban Canada.'

Mary Margan's column appears every other issue. magazine.ca/margan

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'We bundled up but we didn't have gloves'

Michael Kalish of Kings first visited the Quebec Winter Carnival in 2000, after he obtained his degree in broadcasting at Ryerson University. He returned home with an idea, which not put together a team to construct one of the massive snow sculptures that carvers create during the carnival. Over the past year in Nahrash, Kalish, 26, recruited sculptor Peter Mihalek, 26, and beauty queen and environmentalist, Wanda Omenshaw. They then applied their skills February's competition, and were delighted when they were chosen. But, as usual, Kalish (right), prepared for the雕刻 in a country that shuddles the outside in minus 40 degrees.

Packaging has been a huge challenge. We don't have snow gear from the top of Mount Kenya, so we had to adapt - the ski boots had to be Nalibiki and we had to give up one liner in their cold storage. Walking into the freezer for the first time was actually something. I had a bit of experience with cold weather, but the rest of the team hadn't felt this before. We huddled up but we didn't have gloves. We used socks on our hands, but that didn't work, and then I got plastic gloves. But that didn't work either because the plastic holds onto the cold.

Our sculpture will be of a rhino. It's entitled "Kudu," which means "struggling" in Swahili. The theme is appropriate to Africa, isn't it? And

becoming extinct because of poaching and human encroachment on its habitat. Another issue is the melting ice cap on Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. People think global warming is only a problem for the north, but we're having the same problems here. Our mission is to show people that if we're not careful, we may not have any drinks or ice at the store.

Funding the trip has also been a challenge because no one in Kenya understands what snow skiing means. Getting clothes for the Quebec weather will also be hard because we won't have any thermal wear here, but travelling there is up to us so we need all the insulation we can get.



"Good things happen to us as spiritualizing tools and not for gain or status enhancement – outside of the realm of spirituality." In response to questions about the "spiritualization" of the term "spiritual leader," he said: "I think it's important to realize that spirituality, may not be associated with anyone's spiritual leadership. I believe the involvement with any organized church often spiritualized as a 'Spiritual' Church. Religious members and lay persons in Canada appreciate our church involvement assisting in their spiritual growth. Many Baha'i members appreciate our church involvement and feel enriched. To me this kind of involvement is important because the spiritual programs we offer, and what happens to us at our meetings, are spiritual experiences."



THE CONTAINER REFUGEE

We were locked in, far below decks.
Then the air began to run out.

YES, IT'S CRAZY to allow yourself to be shut up in a container for days on the high seas. There's no telling whether you'll come out alive. For some refugees who try to travel by sea, it's the last journey of their lives. But if you don't take risks, you never will. And after all, you can't be sure.

These are the thoughts running through the mind of the crew of the *Dana, Bora, Shabag, Izad, myself and the Moldovans*, who won't tell us his name—above all, he doesn't want us to know his name—as we prepare to dip out of France. First he takes us to the port city of La Havre, where many ships leave for the U.S. and Canada. Dennis from Ukraine, Sime from Russia and Nikolay and Evail are from Belarus. I'm from Belgium, but the complexities of my situation have left me stateless. Our companion, Ghislain—his brought us together.

We hide in the darkness and watch fires behind a fence as the containers are being loaded onto the ship. A security guard drives by, within a few feet of us. Our fear, that man who will find us, wash until the air passes, then slips through a little tear in the fence and disappears between the containers. It is after midnight, and the only sound is that of the crane lifting the containers onto the ship.

The security car comes less frequently than they do, but the floor is taking so long! The wait is difficult. Finally, he shows up. He has managed to open a container filled with liquor that is headed to Bulgaria. We don't hesitate to segue, U.S. or Canada. We quickly help each other unpack the crates with the liquor. Then we run to the container. We get in, and it is sealed from the outside. We are tied and out of breath, too happy to be free in the morning.

The container is filled with crates holding bottles of liquor. Shabag starts work with a drill, making a hole in the container. He drills several holes in the floor, working slowly and surely to keep down the noise. Then he lies down on the crates like the rest of us inside, it's dark as a crypt.

We whisper. The crew should lift the con-

tainer and phoners on the ship. Tired and cold, we drift in and out of sleep, trembling with expectation. We hear the crew moving other container, one after another. This continues for a whole day. Around midnight, our patience is rewarded. The crane finds our container, and we are freed and put onto the ship. We keep quiet, fearing what we will be discovered before the ship sets off. We say nothing.

The liquid is the well-known Hennessy. It is more robust than we should be over hundreds of bottles of cognac and not try any. It is November, and it's cold. We have sleeping bags, dried bread, water and chocolate. We know we should not eat too much. We have plastic bags (and empty liquor bottles) given to relieve ourselves. The loosening sleeping bags, having drunk too much liquor, become noisy. The silly ones stop drinking as that is what they are sleeping.

"Island? Island?" Loud crackles are heard throughout the night. There is probably an unanswered question nearby, banging against others. Between the big fire seems no more than a little scratch. At these

times a telephone rings on the ship. Tired and cold, we drift in and out of sleep, trembling with expectation. We hear the crew moving other container, one after another. This continues for a whole day. Around mid-

night, the captain puts us in a cabin with six beds. First we take chosen, then out. That night, we sleep like people, or animals there. It is hard for me not to think about what I have lived through before.

After three more days, on the evening of Nov. 28, 2001, the ship *Ludwigshafen Express* arrives at Halifax. The immigration authorities have been notified in advance. We stayawards cannot leave the ship and are locked up for safety. The interrogation takes all day. But only five of us are allowed to disembark. The officials decide Sime can not stay in Canada. He does not meet the criteria under the convention on refugees. The same day, the ship heads to New York, carrying Sime to the U.S.

The rest of us go to Canada, waiting for a hearing that will determine our status. But none of us will ever forget the moment that defined a container, and emerging alive. ■



George Varas is based in Australia, still awaiting a resolution of his immigration case. To comment, email varas@latimes.com.



LIFE ON THE INSIDE

David Frum reflects on being a Bush speech writer

THE TRANSITION FROM punditry to speech writing is a rite of going from writing that the speech was losing to writing the losing speech. Canadian author and columnist David Frum crossed over in January 2001, when he joined the new administration of George W. Bush, doubtful that the President had the right stuff, but unable to resist the opportunity of seeing the White House from the inside. "I had been looking for a fractious outside for very long time," Frum writes in *The Right Man: The Surprise Presidency of George W. Bush*. "If only for a little, I would like to look out from inside."

It happened, of course, while the Bush presidency was transformed by the events of Sept. 11, 2001—a day at the office unlike any other. Frum has since successfully escaped

the White House,

and

lived to write about

the experience among the harried band

Bushites—a highly regimented, highly disciplined, God fearing, Bible-quoting outfit that doesn't drink—or least, not to excess—doesn't swear and hasn't done drugs since college. The Bushites are reportedly apprised at 7 p.m. of breaking the rule that what goes in an inside stays inside. They shouldn't be. There's nothing here that Bush Woodward hasn't written about 200 times, back at *Newsweek*, that Frum writes better, more memorably in a reporter writing up verbicide rates of the executive, but in an observer, making his own moral cases at the table.

So much of speech writing for a president or prime minister often involves finding more than words for occasions, or prose about process. The Bush speech-writing team was challenged to go to a higher level in the wake of 9/11. In Bush's National Cathedral address at a memorial service held that day, there was elegance and purpose to his address to Congress, where the bar had been set very high by Franklin Roosevelt's "Day of Infamy" speech after Pearl Harbor, there was overwhelming eloquence and power. Frum presumably credits his colleagues, notably chief speech writer Mike Gerson, but gives most of the credit to Bush himself: "Bush was not an articulate man," Frum writes, "but unlike his father the younger Bush valued the skills he lacked." All news being local, the transplant Texan soon left the oval on the famous No Confidence motion of the congressional address—when the President thanked other states, but not ours, and nothing about the effects of an march across neighbour. "My stomach plunged as I read it," Frum recalls. "All references to Canada had been cut." Bush looks like the late Bush Maier of the *New York Times* of speech writing—if you're going to think someone, you have to thank everyone. "Hail Bush" barked out by former Secretary of State Colin Powell is not smearing the Oval office right? Uh, actually it did distract, and spoke quite knowingly. A little fine check would have been in order here.

But Frum should feel no guilt about writing outlandish and the White House team. He was far enough away from the President to see his feelings, close enough to observe his strengths, and downcast enough to witness the porous of Bush that emerges if a leader confident enough to surround himself among advisors, and brash enough to grow into the job.

President

Frum

has

no

regrets

about

crossing

over.

The environment inside map

have

been

confusing

and

confused,

but

Frum's

writing

was

clear,

and

memorable.

Colin and Arthur L. Ian McEwan, editor of *Policy Review*, compare, was speech writer to Prime Minister Brian Mulroney from 1985 to 1993.

THE BOOTLEGGER AND HIS MOLL

In Calgary, a sensational true story is now an opera, writes BRIAN BERGMAN

A YOUNG IMMIGRANT WOMAN forced into a有毒的 arranged marriage with a much older man. She is later lured into the employ of another man, a dashing bootlegger and, according to community gossip, becomes romantically involved with either him or his son. The women and the bootlegger are implicated in the murder of a police constable. During a secret trial, the defendant's own lawyer appears to put name of the knife in her. But in the end, both are found guilty and sentenced to hang.

The stuff of fiction? Nope, it all happened in a remote corner of the Alberta Rockies dur-

ing Prohibition some eight decades ago. The stuff of opera? Definitely.

On Feb. 1, the Calgary Opera stages the first of three performances of *Filumena*, an original, two act creation based on the life and untimely death of Filumena (Filomena) Loverso, who was sent to the pillow in 1921 at the age of 22, one of the few women to be hanged in Canada. The ambitious, \$1.2-million production, mounted in cooperation with the Bowell Centre (where

With Filumena, Patrice and Marcella resurrect one of the few Canadian women to be hanged

a second set of performances will be staged at Kappa), is one of only a handful of grand operas to be written and produced in Canada in the past 30 years. The brainchild of Calgary Opera composer-in-residence John Estacio and Alberta playwright John Marcella, *Filumena* is presenting the kind of music that would be the envy of any arts organization, let alone a regional opera company that, until recently, was struggling to survive. "People are coming out of the woodwork for this one," says Calgary Opera general director and CEO Bob McPhee, who is anticipating a sellout opening night at Calgary's



PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID LIPNOWSKI



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3,000-seat *Filomena* Auditorium "beyond its artistic significance, what we're witnessing right now is a real event."

Filomena took root about three years ago when Merrill and Estacio met to discuss a possible collaboration. Estacio had recently been hired by Calgary Opera and thought, among other things, with developing companies as part of the company's successful efforts to attract new audiences and wipe off an accumulated debt. The son of Portuguese immigrants, Estacio worried an opera based on a Canadian story—about how sold an immigrant wife, if it had no general resonance for an Alberta audience, so much the better. And, oh yes, one other thing: "I wanted to make sure," says Estacio, 36, "that there was some song in this opera." By that, he meant a basic human story with audience appeal beyond your stereotypical scatological opera buff.

Merrill, artistic director of theatre arts at the Banff Centre and one of Canada's most ingeniously playful playwrights, had seen the role. Several years earlier, he pedled up a dive volume, *The Banff Knows*, which included stories about the illicit liquor trade that flourished in the Canadian Prairies region of the Rockies over the Canada-U.S. border during Prohibition. By far the most intriguing tale concerned Emilia Filomeno (also known as "Empress No."), a charismatic widow who ran a thriving bootlegging operation stretching from Nelson, B.C., to Biegus, while carving out a respectable pedestal career as a hotel and restaurant owner and town councilor.

Filomeno took under his wing Flora Anna Conconi, who had immigrated from Italy as a child and, at age 15, and the much older Carlo Lossetti, one of Flora's father's cronies. Filomeno's job was to pose, along with Maria (Conconi), as part of a young couple who could move freely across the border without arousing suspicion. On a sole bootlegging run, Flora was shot, though not killed, by Const. Stephen O'Lanigan. Filomeno and Flora subsequently rescued Lanigan, who died. It was unclear who pulled the trigger, and both Filomeno and Flora were later charged with murder. Neither settled at the trial, but their lawyer reportedly steered most of the blame toward Filomeno, in the belief that the juries would never sentence a woman to death—if they did, that the sentence would be commuted. It didn't work out that way.

The trial—held, as it happened, in a tiny opera house in Coopers, Alta.—drew national media attention and speculation as to what galvanized gossip. Some speculated Puccini and Filomena were lovers. Others contended that Flora and Flora were having an affair, which might explain why she wanted to witness his shooting. All of that remains unknowable. But Merrill, who has pored over the transcripts of the trial, is convinced of one thing: if the case were heard today, Flora and Filomeno would never have lived out to their deaths. "There is just too much contradictory testimony," says the 37-year-old playwright. "Evidence would be declared or they would be given lesser sentences."

In her opera, Merrill and Estacio depict Flora and Steve [shown here] as

At 16, Flora married an older man, and later became a smuggler for Emilia Filomeno



Stefano as lovers. But the connection between her and Puccini is even tenuous. They imagine that what Flora and Puccini shared was a burning desire to die above their humble origins. Puccini, in their view, uses bootlegging as a way to buy influence, authority and respect in his adopted hometown. Flora was strong at the end—right to the very last act.

Working with Merrill's libretto, Estacio composed an original score consisting of nine distinctive songs adding to a dramatic climax. In addition to the usual arias and ensemble pieces, he incorporates music from the period, including a ragtime piano riff and a soaring lippogoo-and-drums interlude in the policeman's funeral. The final scene of the operas focuses on Flora and Filomeno as their respective principals carry their last bows. Both are contemplating what they will miss about life, but otherwise they are a study in mismatch. Flora is calm and collected; she has accepted responsibility for her actions, stored them, and is looking forward to reentering in the next life. Filomeno is angry, feeling her husband has played her away from his homegrown love. In reality, Flora would be spared: he was literally drugged (given sedatives) and dragged to the guillotine.

The producers of *Filomena* were determined to use an all-Canadian cast. A key challenge was finding the right soprano to play Flora. It had to be someone who combined youthful innocence with the strong theatrical skills needed for such a demanding role (Flora runs the stage for the entire 100-minute opera). After a long search, they settled on a relative newcomer, 33-year-old Terri McManamy native Lauren Whalen. She is joined with Galina Lipartite, one of Canada's most highly regarded harpists, as Filomeno.

For me, even grand operas get produced, even fewer have a long and life. Mindful of the bottomless, open capacities constantly return to such meat-and-milk crowd-pleasers as *Madame Butterfly* and *Cavalleria Rusticana* and Merrill recognizes that most opera goers often would view *Filomena* in a silly proportion. But they believe the production has legs. "The first thing takes place in the Canadian Prairies in an different than the fact *Cavalleria* takes place in Sicily," says Estacio. "It has universal characters and universal themes. Above all, it's just a great story." The stuff of opera, indeed. ■



Business | Crafty and cunning in a cramped office

Jennifer Klaeger and Susie Ord are not typical executive types. The 23-year-old co-owners of Foxy Originals, a jewellery design and manufacturing company, share a desk in a cramped Toronto office—and they live in it. They eat at a bare-bones card. "It's symbolic of our company," says Klaeger. "Each of us has an equal say in everything."

Klaeger and Ord began their partnership in 1996 and in 2000 they both earned at the University of Western Ontario's Schulich School of Business. They spent their first three years between classes and in the summers designing, crafting and distributing handmade necklaces, bracelets and rings to stores in Toronto, London and Waterloo. They named the company Foxy after finding up the word in the dictionary. "One of

PEOPLE | 50
Teaching young cats new tricks
A Canadian tiger trainer makes his home in South Africa, shoving cuts from his heart.



BOOKS | 51

A small island and its huge empire During the 18th century, as India Colony argues in Captives, British leaders worried where to find the resources to rule a burgeoning empire. They found the answer in complex and often roughly equal battleships with many of their new subjects.



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the definitions for fun was crazy and exciting," says Klaeger. "It just fit us perfectly."

Fox Originals was really picking up last year as sales were consistently double-digit. They needed to focus attention on their final exams. "We didn't want to shoot ourselves in the foot by being caught while we were finishing up our designs," says Ord. "Now our distribution and accounting systems are in place and we are ready to take a big leap."

This month, they're launching nationally. And they expect to have them in 200 boutique and specialty stores across the country by the end of the year. In 2004, they plan to enter the U.S. market. They target females aged 16 to 30 and the silver-coated pewter pieces range in price from \$15 to \$36. "We are about to launching pieces down," says Ord. "We're both big bargain hunters."

JOHN HENRY
Werner Hoffmann

Listings | Curtain call

Theatre
Sept. 16-18
The Stratford Theatre is the first stop on a national tour of this Crown's Theatre production by Toronto's James O'Reilly. It's the story the writer who tries to capture the essence of Chef Baker, the late jazz band leader and jazz vocalist.

Mary's Wedding
Sept. 13-Mon. 2
Part-First World War stories, part love stories, this Prime Time Exchange production was written by English playwright Stephen Massicott. When?

Art
Sept. 1-4
Theatre Bess
Bessie Head presents the Tony Award-winning comedy Footer Girl written by G. David Johnson. More Footer and Simon Rabyberry. The play will leave the presence after its final run in the capital city Nov. 20.

Capogaglia
Sept. 23-Pt. II
A Memphis Thriller production by London-based Michael Frayn. Cooper's characters are actual people, but the action is occupied drama during the Second World War between actress Hattie Gordon and her former German husband Werner Hoffmann.



Music | Celebrating three decades in the big leagues

Setting up a Tenant call, Canadian rocker Stompin' Cobain celebrates 30 years and what you see is what you get. Cobain's career is legendary, dominated by self and algae. His giddily raunchy behaviour of helping a woman with her coat is rare—permed. He's also a homebody, working in Africa with World Vision and collaborating with the Parkinson Society Canada.

Of course the singer-songwriter is best known for hits like Long Way Up and I'm a Highwayman. And now, after almost 30 years in the music business—between seven Juno Awards and his albums Meat Mat World sold over two million copies North America—Cobain's released Trapeze, a 20 song retrospective CD compilation and DVD, featuring his work with Red Rider. "We're taking a trap instead of 'Best Of,'" says

Cobain, "because 'Best Of' is an oxymoron."

The 49-year-old still has stories to tell. In 2000, he finished writing Just Like Us, a novel based on Trapeze about his father's struggle with Parkinson's disease. Cobain performed the song at a ceremony for Michael and Alli this past October in Toronto—and anyone entering the prologue was instructed, "I said, 'You've got big inspiration in my dad, he has Parkinson's.' He said 'thank you' and with his hands shaking he took this big wad of bills he was carrying and peeled one off, handing it over with a smile. It was a fake million-dollar bill."

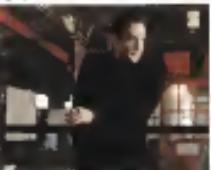
Like November, Cobain's dad, Buck, isn't his seven-year battle with Parkinson's. Cobain sang at the funeral. "Song," he says, "are a wonderful vessel to stir the emotions of the heart." MIKE BUTTERY

Film | Portrait of a führer

John Cusack seems unprepared for the filming about the mentality of the führer. But in portraying Adolf Hitler, the Jewish-artist director who befriends a young holocaust survivor named Adolf Hitler—most Hollywood star does that. "He would tends to view Hitler as some kind of monster, but ultimately the horrors of the Third Reich originated from a man who made certain moral choices. Cusack says something that may be uncomfortable to consider. "If he's got horns, and he can't lose another planet and was descended earth to take over the world, then we wouldn't have to address it." In contemplating about Hitler's youth, what does he mean there—and it's disturbing, Hugh Taylor (daniel day-lewis) the führer. In training as an annoying character, although playing Nazi, Hitler's adorable, but it's recognizably fresh and lived.

He's also an easy target, and classical characters in a couple of letters: "You're a bit key, mate," and, "you're unusually hard manna like." At a previous screening, these lines, along with the also-to-be-classic, "Hitler, come, I'll buy you a glass of rumour," drew laughter. Cusack seems surprised: "I feel," he says, "it was nervous laughter." The Oldboy and LA-tossed star says he had many reasons for wanting to be involved in this risky project. "I was interested in the period, in the art, in exploring the banality of evil and the banality of mediocrity, which is going from the First World War. Hitler was born out of the banality." He was also also swayed by the fact that director Mervin Meeds wasn't making a personal pic. "These characters, says Cusack, could entice more."

That's actually one of the themes running in pieces of art, which is set in 1938. Cusack characters a First World War veteran who lost an arm at combat, whom more a product of modern times than even that eight days ago. He speech and movements seem a caricature, it is the clever performance, but the film with its bold yet banal concept, leaves a lasting impression. SHARON DICKINSON



Dickinson provides the banality of evil



People | Untaming tigers

In January 2006, Bruce Selwyns, a big cat trainer at Ontario's Rosewood Zoo, was given 24 hours to pack his bags and leave for South Africa. He had been raising two Bengal tiger cubs, Sam and Julia, that were to be hand-reared over to the Tiger Moon Sanctuary, 600 km southwest of Johannesburg. But when Tiger Moon's owner came to pick them up, he recognized Selwyns' skill with the cub and asked him to move with them.

Selwyns travelled with the tigers to the 40,000-hectare game park where they would be taught to live in the wild as part of a conservation project. Tapirapene dictated the experience would fail because tigers born in captivity had been success-

fully released into the wild. Also, tigers are not indigenous to South Africa, raising concerns over how the introduction of the new species would affect the natural habitat. But Selwyns explains that the sanctuary is situated on land that's been destroyed by farming and would benefit from the project. "When we started there were no animals," he says. "We're building the enclosures back up." As well as tigers, Tiger Moon plans to bring in 250,000 elephants, which was born on the wild and is currently residing at the Rosewood Zoo.

Over the past three years in South Africa, Selwyns has taught Koo and Julie to hunt. In a 60-hectare enclosure, he would hold the tigers' leashes as game come into sight. "They would be sprinting around," warning

South Africa-based Selwyns trains cubs from the Rosewood Zoo to live in the wild.

to run straight for it," says Selwyns. "I would teach them to wait for the game to get nearer." Tigers are natural predators, so their prey has to be fairly close for them to catch it. Now the tigers, each weighing approximately 225 kg, have moved from small pens to living in 250,000-hectare围籠 (walled-in areas).

This March, Selwyns, 27, will release and rehouse the siblings in a 60,000-hectare enclosure within the sanctuary. If all goes well, he'll continue the project at Tiger Moon with other endangered species of tigers. "I may be a big part of saving a subspecies," says Selwyns. "This is a full-time passion for me."

HELEN BURTON

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW DUCH

Books | How a small island ruled much of the world

The so-called first British empire, the one that took a sheep reflexive in 1783—after the fall of independence with the 13 colonies—was a far cry from the later powerhouses Queen Victoria reigned over. At its height in 1838 the population of England stood at only 12 million, during the 18th century, an historian Leslie Collet writes in *Captive Kingdom*. His study of an almost accidental empire, many British leaders feared their resources weren't sufficient to defend it. Ruling those possessions demanded a far greater equality between governors and governed than existed then (Native Americans were viewed allies against the French and, afterwards, rebellious colonists, while most "British" troops in India were actually Indian sepoys). Collet approaches those complex relationships through what the calls cross-hybridization—the accounts left by many of the thousands of Indians who fell into the hands of foreigners, with their own government unable to help them. Those survivors, Collet argues, showed an ability to adapt and to learn from the circumstances that was of incalculable value to the empire.



BESTSELLERS

Fiction

	POSITION LAST WEEK
1. THE LOVED RIBBON, MARGARET COOK	1
2. THE INTRICACY OF RUTH TROY, Helen Arden	2
3. CIRCUSMAGIA, Philbrick, Jennifer	3
4. UNLUCK, Carol Shields	1
5. GATSBYLAND, Jennifer Egan	2
6. THIS PAPER HOUSE, Kristin Clarke	3
7. THAT OLD HOPE IN ENHOLM, Anders Roslund	4
8. THE LAST CROWN, Michael Morpurgo	5
9. THE CRIMSON PETAL AND THE WHITE, Michael Faber	6
10. ANARCHY WAS BORN, Michelle Wieley	10

Non-fiction

1. PARADISE LOST, Margaret Atwood	1
2. NEVER WHERE I AM NOT, Michael Ignatieff	1
3. BIRDSCAPE, Jennifer Egan	2
4. FORTY-FIVE PERCENT, Charlotte Haze	3
5. LADIES' NIGHT, Sophie Dahl	2
6. PHYSICAL ATLAS OF CANADA, Denis Hayes	2
7. GARDEN SCAVENGER HANDBOOK, Hugh Johnson	7
8. DANIEL PEPIN, Thérèse Duguay	9
9. MARTINET CHAUVEL, JOHN RICHARD	21
10. BORN TO RULE, Jim Woodward	22

1. Number one book
2. Entered by three authors

MACLEAN'S | JANUARY 27, 2006

ROADS SCHOLARS



Canadian university researchers are paving the way to innovative, more efficient and environmentally friendly ways to get you where you're going.



You're late. And the bridge is down to one lane because of repairs. Dr. Braden Klemmick at the University of Sherbrooke. He's helping to design and test fiber-reinforced polymers (FRPs) to replace steel reinforcement in concrete structures such as bridges and parking garages. Lighter and stronger than steel, FRPs are also more durable, which should reduce the time and money spent on repairing concrete infrastructure.

Of the 18,000 university scientists and engineers whose research is funded by NSERC (the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council), here are just a few of the many who are driving the success of research related to safe, efficient and clean transportation.

- Elizabeth Connor (University of Calgary) / Philip Hill (University of British Columbia) / David Martens (Université de Québec à Montréal) / David Charkiewicz (University of Alberta) / Susan Tiegs (University of Waterloo) / Jeff Saltan (Sault College) / Eric MacLachlan (University of New Brunswick) / Steven Holzkamp (Simon Fraser University) / Sathish Shanmugam (University of Regina) / Linda Nazar (University of Waterloo) / Seamus Leahy (University of Guelph) / Mo-Shing Chow (University of Ottawa) / Everett Peplow (Royal Military College) / Anthony Petru (McMaster University) / Daniel Gray (NSERC Institute of Mathematics, Université de Québec) / Jean-Yves Potvin (Université de Montréal) ...

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Canada



THE FINE ART OF FAKERY

Are there any among us who don't bend the truth sometimes when it suits us?

IN CASE YOU ever need to pull out a gizzard, I'm a killer at a cocktail party. The first few times, the way conversation flits lightly from topic to topic—and just seems perfect for someone like me, a person, as I described it recently, "of somewhat broad but superficial interests"—I was a bit taken aback. For example, I found myself popping a "paper" here holding flutes on the shadowy, the Tang-era Chinese poet Tu Fu and the best way to protect yourself if attacked by a giant whale shark. There was, of course, a certain subtlety to all this since I knew nothing about any of these matters. So what? No one was about to point a finger in my direction and say, "Wait a minute, where the heck did you learn about a certain whale shark anyway?" To do so, after all, would involve breaking some spoken, deeply held rule; you probe the depths of my actual knowledge about place names, bodies, and so on. I have a few words to say regarding your little riff on the un-derived masked genius of Edward Gorey.

You, presumably, everybody has to fake it to get through a dinner party or conversing with a co-worker. That's where something about the times seems to demand it. Sometimes the price of displaying the true extent of your ignorance for all to see is simply too great. I'm not talking about the confused look in your daughter's eyes when she realizes that daddy would have a seriously hard time passing Grade 6 math. I mean when the guy at the garage sells and says something that sounds like, "It's your place," before adding, "It's short." It should not, of course, matter whether you have any idea what he's talking about. Just say "Dammit, we got a new one last year. Isn't there some warranty left?" If, on the other hand, you sit there with the unknown purchase, you've made a bad strategic error. Lowered head and you might hear him say that his research events out the other end of the line, breaking out the champagne. A couple of hours later, I say this from real, first-hand experience—you'll be \$1,500 poorer and own a car that still sounds as if a wild ani-

mal has made its home under the hood.

You ask what I'm getting at here and this is where it's a question of self-preservation. Like when Ross, the guy with the great palate at the wine store, has you in his sights. If you begin innocently enough, perhaps with such banalities ("he has something red that will match the robe I'm wearing"), he'll start to ask questions about "name" and "brand," like "Cab-Sauv" and "peppery Merlot." Now you're dead meat. I once ran into the wine-hunting for a six-pack of Alexander Keith's. But wait a day. A half-hour later, I emerged blinking in bewilderment, carrying a case of "ahem fruity" Pinot Noir that won't be desirable until my 12-year-old daughter is in university.

Some times you have to take it right as you get it. Because all it takes is a few lay words or phrases—"your student," "Athens Diet" and "proposition impossible," to let three amateur examples—called for—possess control of a magazine like this one. Strange, isn't it? However unformed, can help ("C'est-à-dire André Charland is the last CEO Canada Post has ever had!"). So



Atlantic Avenue Client: John DeMont is dynamic at parties. In response to DeMont's ca-

concerns—sarcasm, garrulous, shaggy—should hang among the most useful—so long as it's sufficiently energetic. Or an expression that, better yet, somehow conveys knowledge of inside information to which the listener is not privy.

I know this sounds heretical. I also know it's a hard world out there where the wolves circle any time you show up in lagging behind the learning curve. Politicians, television anchors, business executives and talking heads on television leave this implicitly but my silences in which the expression the non-narrative someone is bubbling is about their latest lineup and you are you always choose the one "what has the most votes?" Notice how you've suddenly shown up at the reception after your marriage, a conversation about the new Spike Lee film by asking whether Edward Norton was named after that guy with the funny hair on *The Honeydripper*.

But there can also be a downside to faking it so well. Throughout Christmas, when the world junior championship was drawing my hometown of Halifax ice rink, I bluffed my way through more conversations than I'd care to admit about what will happen when the Russians head onto the ice with the North American boys and whether Jordie Tootoo is big enough for the big show. I am still paying the price thinking I'm only a year, people I know have taken to filling our conversation with news of recent birth, studies, growth, appreciation and let out the occasional "oh man." Once, I mumbled something about "the importance of solid fundraising," a phrase I'd read on a Web site somewhere.

But what's the alternative? This is a society where a guy's credibility is suspect if he isn't willing to offer up some opinion on what really happened to Noriel Soule, keep my secret card. I'm more than willing to take it when the word comes. Like just the other day, when I was in the lineup at Canadian Tire, talking, naturally, with a world-renowned classic professor about the holocaust slogan. Waiting for the line to move, I bobbed and weaved below Blatnick was something about Bylek—she's lesbophile, right? He raised an eyebrow suspiciously. So I asked him if he'd been to any of the hockey games. "That's Dennis," I said, after he shook his head. Then I learned, because I know it: this guy was all alone.

ILLUSTRATION BY ANDREW RYAN



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